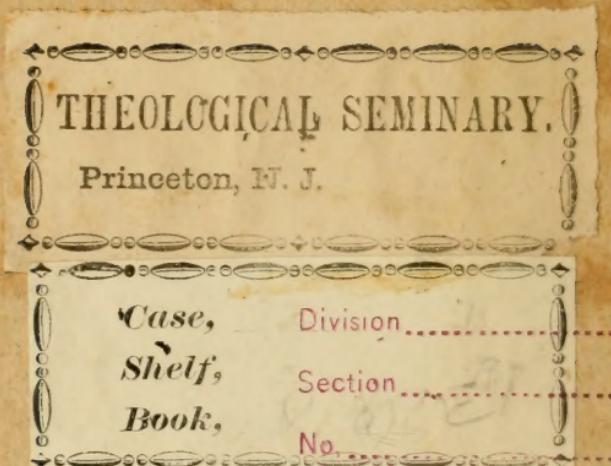


156

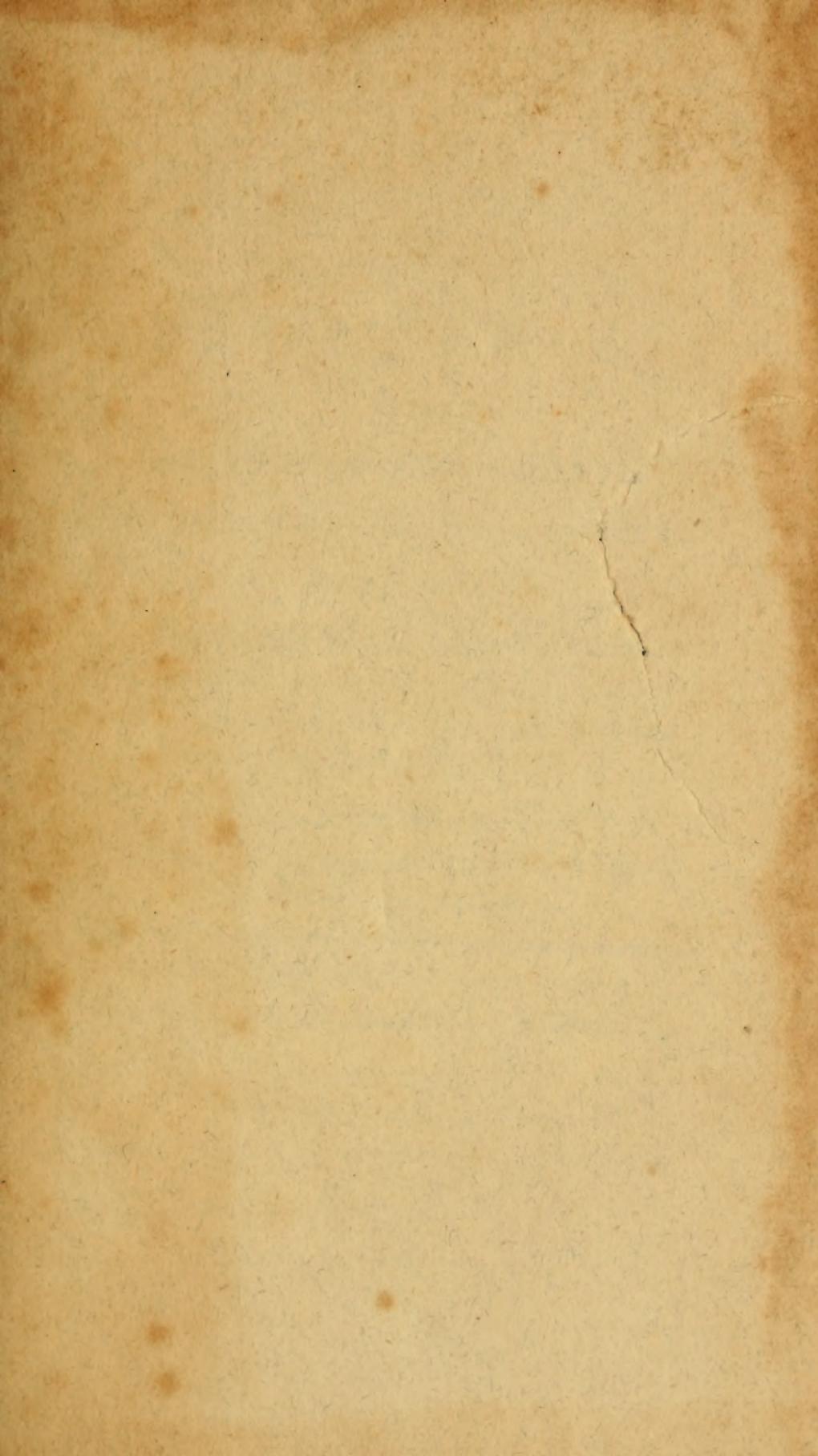
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156







A
K E Y
TO THE
PROPHECIES
OF THE
OLD & NEW TESTAMENTS,
WHICH ARE NOT YET ACCOMPLISHED:
CONTAINING,
I. RULES FOR THEIR ARRANGEMENT.
II. OBSERVATIONS ON THEIR DATES.
III. A GENERAL VIEW OF THE EVENTS
FORETOLD IN THEM.

BY ALEXANDER FRASER, A. M.
MINISTER OF KIRKHILL.

None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.
DAN. xii. 10.

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CHINESE TUNIC

BY ALEXANDER KUHNEL, A.M.
MINISTER OF FINANCE.

TO

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL

Sir HECTOR MUNRO, of NOVAR,

K. B. & L. L. D.

SIR,

I take the liberty of inscribing this book to you, and request your acceptance of it as a public, tho' a small testimony of gratitude and respect from a man who feels himself indebted to you for many important favours, which you have made much greater by your manner of conferring them.

I have the honour to be,

Most respectfully, Sir,

Your faithful, and

Obedient servant,

ALEX. FRASER.

Kirkhill, Jan. 15, 1795.

CONTENTS.

PART I.

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Rules for the Arrangement of the Prophecies,</i>	17
Rule I. <i>The Apocalypse,</i> - - - -	20
II. <i>New Testament Interpretations,</i> - - -	22
III. <i>The State of the Jews,</i> - - -	25
IV. <i>The Millennium,</i> - - -	29
V. <i>The Connection,</i> - - - -	32

PART II.

Observations on their Dates.

Section I. <i>Time in which the Reign of Antichrist began,</i> - - - -	51
II. <i>Duration and End of Antichrist's Reign,</i>	58
III. <i>Time in which the Ottoman Empire falls,</i>	61
IV. <i>Time of the Vials in general,</i>	ib.
V. <i>Time of the Destruction of Rome,</i>	70
VI. <i>Time of the Conversion of the Jews,</i>	73
VII. <i>Time of the Battle of Armageddon,</i>	81
VIII. <i>Time in which the Millennium begins,</i>	83
IX. <i>Time in which Gog appears,</i>	84

PART

P A R T III.

The Remarkable Events foretold in the Prophecies.

C H A P T E R I.

	Page
<i>The Present state of the World and the Church, as described in the Prophecies,</i>	87
Section I.	
I. <i>The Ottoman Empire,</i>	88
II. <i>The Antichristian Empire,</i>	91
III. <i>Of the 144,000 Sealed Ones,</i>	143
IV. <i>Of the Witnesses,</i>	147
V. <i>Of the Woman hid in the Wilderness,</i>	156

C H A P T E R II.

<i>Of future Events which shall take place, betwixt the present time, and the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet,</i>	165
Section I.	
I. <i>A gradual waste of Antichrist's Empire,</i>	166
II. <i>The Death of the Witnesses,</i>	167
III. <i>The Resurrection of the Witnesses,</i>	170
IV. <i>Fall of the Pope's Temporal Sovereignty,</i>	172
V. <i>Fall of the Ottoman Empire,</i>	176

C H A P T E R III.

<i>Of the Events which take place from the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet to the Fifth Vial, or the Destruction of Rome,</i>	178
Section I.	
I. <i>State of the Church at the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet,</i>	181
II. <i>Observations on the Vials,</i>	194

Section

	Page
Section III. <i>The First Vial,</i>	202
IV. <i>The Second Vial,</i>	204
V. <i>The Third Vial,</i>	205
VI. <i>The Fourth Vial,</i>	209
VII. <i>The Fifth Vial,</i>	213

C H A P T E R. IV.

Of the Events that take place from the Destruction of Rome, to the Battle of Armageddon, or Seventh Vial, 236

Section I. <i>The Papal Power is erected in Judea,</i>	<i>ib.</i>
II. <i>A virulent Persecution of the Jews is carried on by the Papal Power in a great part of Asia and Africa,</i>	251
III. <i>The great Body of the Jewish Nation, expelled from their Dwellings by the Persecution, are gathered together in the Desarts of Curdistan.</i>	269
IV. <i>The Jews are converted to Christianity in the Desart, where they are gathered together;</i>	281
V. <i>The Jews are trained by God in the Desart 40 years from the Date of their Conversion,</i>	310
VI. <i>The Conversion of the Jews gives joy to the Church of Christ, but stirs up the Papal Power to collect forces against them,</i>	324

C H A P.

CHAPTER V.

	Page
<i>Of the Battle of Armageddon,</i> - - - -	331
Section I. <i>The Place of the Battle is near Jerusalem,</i> • <i>ib.</i>	
II. <i>The Parties are, on the one side, the Papal Power, assisted by the Kings of the Earth, and their Armies; on the other side, the converted Jews,</i> - - - -	337
III. <i>The Circumstances of the Battle, issuing in a glorious Victory for the Jews,</i> : -	351

CHAPTER VI.

<i>Of the Events that take place betwixt the Battle of Armageddon and the Millennium,</i> - - - -	363
Section I. <i>Resettlement of the Jews in the Land of Promise,</i> - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
II. <i>Final Extirpation of Popery,</i> - - - -	272
III. <i>Conquest of the Countries in the neighbourhood of Judea, by the Jews,</i> - - - -	378
IV. <i>Restoration of the dispersed Jews,</i> - - - -	393
V. <i>Missionaries are sent from Judea, to propagate the Gospel among the Nations,</i> - - - -	395

CHAPTER VII.

<i>Of the Millennium,</i> - - - -	401
Section I. <i>The Confinement of Satan,</i> - - - -	402
II. <i>The Resurrection and Reign of the Martyrs,</i> - - - -	404
III. <i>Characters of the Millennium Church,</i> - - - -	419

CHAP.

CONTENTS.

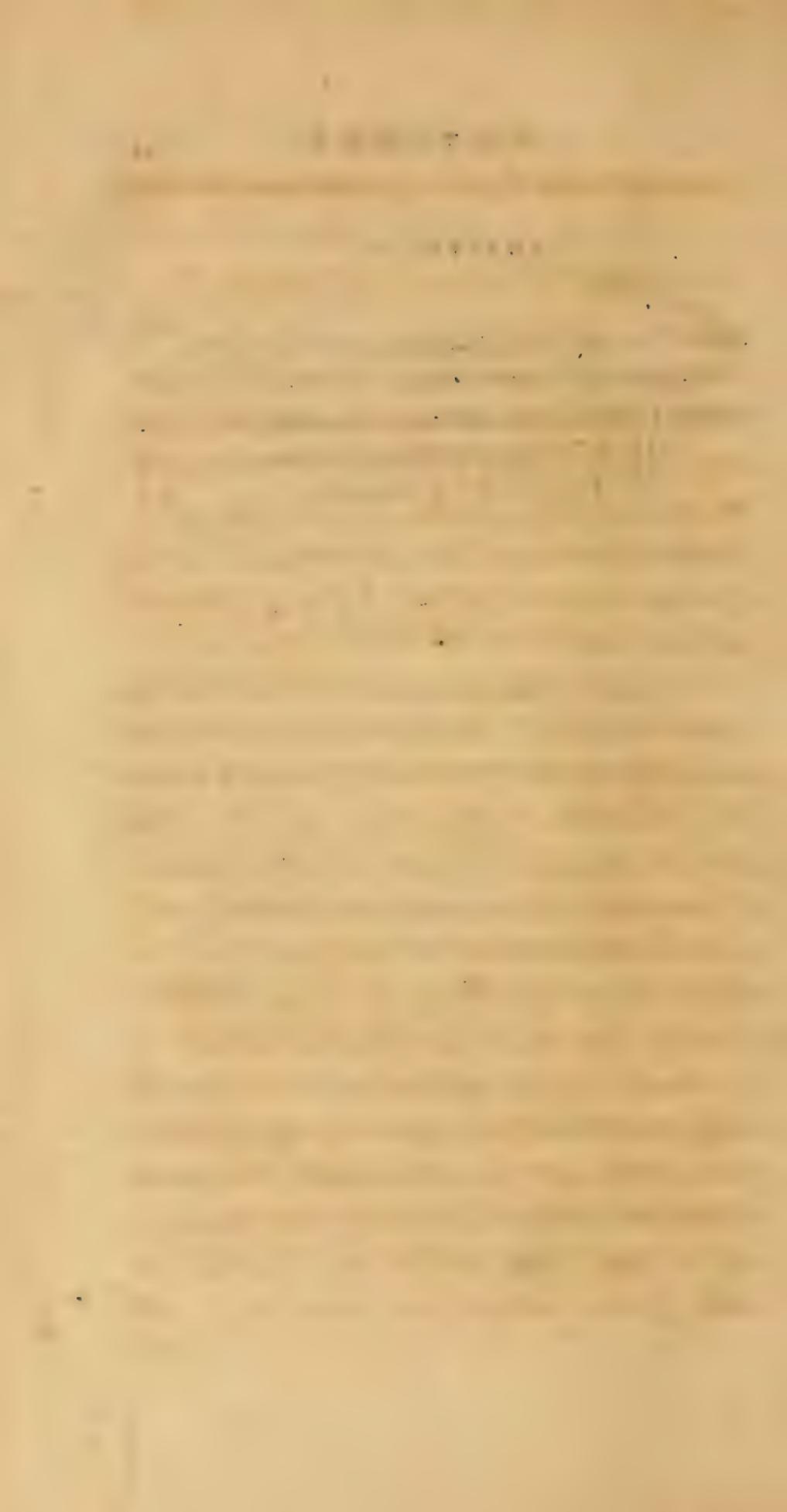
ix

CHAPTER VIII.

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Of the Events which shall take place from the close of the Millennium to the great Day of Judgment,</i>	453
Section I. <i>The Invasion of the Church by Gog,</i>	<i>ib.</i>
II. <i>A Decline in the Gentile Churches,</i>	468
III. <i>The great Day of Judgment,</i> -	473

B

INTRO-



INTRODUCTION.

THE design of the following treatise, is to detail, on the authority of Scripture, the remarkable events which take place in the church, and in the world, as far as it is connected with the church, from the present period to the last judgment.

No doubt the attempt will appear to some fruitless. But they who revere the authority of the Scriptures, should recollect, " that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy ;" that the completion of prophecy is the great argument for the truth of Christianity in the latter days, by which the prejudices of the Jews, and the enmity of the Gentiles, shall be finally overcome. It is reasonable, therefore, to infer, that the view given in the prophecies, of the events which shall take place in the latter days, is clearer than that given of any other period; and that as the time of their completion draws near, we may

may expect that God will be pleased to remove, in some measure, the obscurity which veiled them, in order to prepare the minds of men for the argument arising from their completion. Whether the author has succeeded, in drawing aside the veil in any degree, time only can determine with absolute certainty. In the meantime, let the reader carefully examine, and then judge. “ He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.”¹

Perhaps the attempt will appear to others unprofitable, even though it should be in some measure successful; because the argument from prophecy is founded on the coincidence of the dispensations of Providence with the representations of prophecy, which can only be seen after their completion. It will be readily allowed that a detail of events previous to their accomplishment, cannot be the ground of the general argument arising from prophecy; but the previous detail effectually removes an objection, repeatedly urged by

(1) Prov. xviii. 13.

by infidels, against the argument. "If " (say they) so much is to be seen in the " prophecies after their accomplishment, " why do we not see any thing at all be- " fore it?" I answer: Examine the fol- lowing treatise, and you will find a great many events minutely described before their accomplishment.

There are some persons well affected to religion, who allow themselves to think that the progress of infidelity and vice shall overwhelm the interests of righte- ousness and truth; while others entertain false notions of the kingdom of Christ, though they expect that it shall finally prevail. If the detail given in the follow- ing treatise has a tendency to remove the fears of the one, and to rectify the opinions of the other, the attempt of the author is not altogether unprofitable.

There are several passages in the pro- phecies, which, by consent of all, are so obscure, that no commentator has hitherto attempted to illustrate their literal meaning. If the interpretation offered in the follow- ing pages shall throw light on those dark

pas-

passages, or the rules given shall suggest to persons of superior abilities and greater opportunities, a mode of investigating their genuine meaning, the apology of the author, for offering this treatise to the public, will be sustained, by those who desire a farther knowledge of the sacred oracles.

The prophecies concerning the Jewish nation in the latter days, have not been hitherto properly investigated. The comments of Christians on these prophecies have a tendency to confirm the Jews in their prejudices against Christianity. Prophecies which are exclusively applicable to the Jewish nation, are commonly applied to the Christian church in general. Prophecies which relate to the Millennium, when the kingdom of Christ shall be established in the world, are frequently applied to the first propagation of the Gospel. Important events respecting the Jewish nation, which the Jews themselves see in the prophecies, are treated by Christians as extravagant fancies. The Jews discern the misapplication, in these instances, and therefore hastily conclude,

that

that the prophecies concerning the Messiah are equally misapplied by Christians. But in the following treatise, the prophecies which relate to the Jewish nation in the latter days, are separated from such as respect the Christain church in general, arranged in their proper order, and represented under one view. In them we see, that events expected by the Jews, are not altogether without Scripture authority; such as a glorious manifestation of the Messiah to their nation; and that they shall be employed, as the instruments in his hand, for subduing idolatry and irreligion on earth, as well by the temporal as by the spiritual sword; while these events are so blended with the previous ill treatment and long rejection of the Messiah by their nation, that he appears to be no other than JESUS OF NAZARETH. If the detail given has a tendency to soften the prejudices of the Jews, and procure from them a patient hearing to the truth, it will be allowed that the author's attempt may prove of service to the interests of religion,

The

The following treatise consists of three parts. In the first, the Rules for the Arrangement of the prophecies are laid down, in order to shew, that the detached passages brought to illustrate the same event, are collected, not according to the writer's imagination, but according to marks inserted in the prophecies themselves; so that the arrangement, and the light arising from it, depend not on the authority of the interpreter, but of the prophet.

The second part contains Observations on the Dates of the several remarkable Events; particularly a resolution of that question, When the kingdom of Antichrist commenced? That being the period to which the several prophetic calculations chiefly refer.

In the third part, the Events are detailed according to the order laid down in the Apocalypse; while the passages of the Old Testament prophecies which refer to these events are quoted and explained, as we go along the series, in order to illustrate them more fully.

A

K E Y

TO THE

P R O P H E C I E S,

WHICH ARE NOT YET ACCOMPLISHED.

PART I.

Rules for their Arrangement.

THE obscurity of the prophecies arises partly from the language in which they are conveyed, but chiefly from the manner in which they are arranged. The labours of the learned have already thrown so much light on the language of prophecy, that it can be no longer unintelligible

C

intelligible

intelligible to the attentive reader'. I would only observe, that in order to understand the language of prophecy, it is not absolutely necessary to be skilled in the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians, or the Oneirocritics² of the Indians; it will be sufficient for the reader to be familiarly acquainted with his Bible. The prophets constantly allude to the history and customs recorded in Scripture. A knowledge of these, as well as of the figurative expressions in the prophets, which have their explication annexed, will go a great way to remove the difficulty arising from the prophetical language.

The arrangement of the prophecies is not so easy a matter; to bring together the several passages which refer to the same event, so as to view it by their united light. Such an arrangement, like the glass of a telescope, collects the scattered rays of a distant object to one point, and so forms a distinct image. The difficulty of arranging the prophecies, is owing to various causes. They were delivered by several men,
in

(1.) See Mede's *Clavis Apocalyptic*, *Perpetual Dictionary*, prefixed to *Daubuze on the Apocalypse*, and *Hurd's sermons at the Lincoln's Inn lectures*.

(2.) A book of this name, on the Indian method of interpreting dreams, is frequently referred to by Mede in his *Clavis Apocalyptic*.

in various and distant periods of time ; so that, taking to the account their several abilities, dispositions, knowledge, education, and manners, it is not easy to say what particular passages in one prophet correspond with those in another, and relate to the same event.

Again, in the same prophet the different visions seem to be arranged without any regard to the order of time in which the prophet received them'. But it is obvious that this, in some degree, increases the obscurity.

After all, we should mistake the matter greatly, did we suppose that the prophet received a view of future events according to the order of time in which they were to be accomplished ; that is, that the nearer events were communicated to him first, and the more remote events last. The fact is, that the prophet being commissioned to instruct the men of his own time, he introduces future events, as they are related to the consolation or reproof which he communicates at the time,

(1.) The prophecy contained in the 34th chapter of Jeremiah, the prophet received towards the close of the reign of Zedekiah, ver. 1, 2. That in the following chapter he received in the reign of Jehoiakim, at least twelve years before ; chap. xxxv. 1. And the prophecy contained in the 36th chapter he received the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign ; that is, eighteen years before.

time, without any regard to the time or order in which these events should be accomplished. In this consists the chief difficulty of arrangement. But it is likewise to be observed, that future events are sometimes introduced according to their natural order, and that purely for the instruction of the church in after ages.

But though the difficulty is great, it is not I hope insuperable. There are marks in the prophecies themselves which direct to their arrangement, and will obviously occur, upon a frequent and attentive perusal of them; so that the general order of events may be ascertained, and the several passages relating to the same event, may be brought to bear upon it with their united light; and thus represent it, though still future, with a degree of clearness and perspicuity, which the inattentive could hardly conceive or believe. I shall briefly state those rules for the arrangement, which have occurred to me.

R U L E I.

The Apocalypse.

THE Apocalypse is not only a distinct prophecy by itself, but may be likewise considered as an index to all the prophecies which refer to the period of which it treats; that is, from the beginning

beginning of the gospel-dispensation to the day of judgment. It proves an index, by shewing the general order of events, and their relative situation to each other; so that, when an event is introduced in the Old Testament prophecies, in a detached manner, not connected with what goes before, or follows after, we are enabled, by the aid of the Apocalypse, to refer it to its proper place, in the series of events.

The series of events is carried on in the Apocalypse by seven seals opened in their order, seven trumpets sounded in their order, and seven vials poured out in their order. The seven trumpets are the evolution of the seventh seal, the seven vials are the evolution of the seventh trumpet. The seventh vial introduces the Millennium, from which period the aspect of the church and the world is uniform until the day of judgment, except a short interruption by Gog, at the close of the Millennium. Now, as every remarkable event yet to be accomplished, is referred in the Apocalypse to some one of the trumpets or vials, to the duration or close of the Millennium, the place of such event, in the general order of events, is known, and to that place it may be referred, wherever it occurs.

Again, the Apocalypse not only shews the general order of events, but by using the expressions of the Old Testament prophets, refers the reader

reader to particular passages, where the same event is treated of more fully. Thus the “wine pres,” mentioned Rev. xiv. and xix. obviously refers to Joel chap. iii. which treats of the same event. And the army of Gog, Rev. xx. is a reference to the 38th and 39th chap. of Ezekiel. However, it must be acknowledged, that the expressions of the Old Testament prophets are sometimes used, on account of a similarity in the events, though they are not the same. This part of the rule, therefore, is not decisive, unless upon examining the passage referred to, it is confirmed by the coincidence of some of the rules which follow.

R U L E II.

New Testament Interpretations.

SEVERAL passages of the Old Testament prophecies are quoted and explained in the New Testament. Every passage of this kind I consider as a key to open up the whole section of prophecy connected with it. Thus, Isaiah lix. 20. “The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob,” is quoted by the Apostle Paul, Rom. xi. 26. and applied to the conversion and restoration of the Jewish nation. Hence I infer, that the former part of the chapter

chapter represents the sins of the Jews in their present dispersion ; and the following chapter, which is evidently connected with it, shews the glory of their church after their conversion to Christianity.

All Christians must allow, that this rule is well founded, because the Spirit of God is the best interpreter of his own expressions ; but few, if any, in their comments upon Scripture, have been directed by it, as they ought.

To give an instance, in the case of a prophecy already fulfilled. In the 28th chapter of *Isaiah*, are two verses, quoted and explained in the New Testament ; ver. 11. is applied by the Apostle Paul, 1 Cor. xiv. 21. to the gift of tongues in the apostle's days ; ver. 16. is said to signify, that the kingdom of Christ should be established, in defiance of the Jews, who rejected him ; Eph. ii. 20. and 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5.

Now, all the commentaries I have seen apply the whole of the chapter to the state of the Jews in Hezekiah's time, and the invasion of Senacherib. They allow the New Testament interpretation to be true, only in a secondary sense ; the consequence is, that the interpretation of the whole chapter does not hang together, but is perplexed and contradictory ; whereas, if the quotations from the New Testament be considered as a key, and the chapter from the

the 7th verse downward, be applied to the times in which our Saviour appeared, the perplexity is removed, the interpretation appears connected, and every expression of the prophet has been fully verified by the event.

If ver. 11. signifies the teaching of Senacherib's rod, how does that agree with the doctrine taught? "To whom he said, This is the rest " wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest, " and this is the refreshing, yet they would not " hear ;" ver. 12. Was it to offer rest that Senacherib invaded Judea? But was not this the design of the apostle's ministry, to point out Jesus as the Messiah, whom the prophets foretold, their fathers expected, and in whom their souls should find rest and refreshment? The address to the rulers, ver. 14, 15. if applied to Hezekiah's time, supposes a faction in opposition to his government, which the history of these times does not warrant; whereas, without supposing any thing, but what is on record, the address is perfectly applicable to the rulers of the Jewish nation in our Saviour's time. They derided and rejected the Saviour, to ingratiate themselves with the Roman people, the great destroyers of mankind at that period. " If we " let him thus alone, (say they) all men will " believe on him, and the Romans shall come " and

“ and take away both our place and nation ;”
John xi. 48.

In ver. 18.—22. it appears, that the covenant of the rulers, with the destroyers called Death, ended in the destruction of the rulers, and the utter desolation of their land. Was this the end of Senacherib’s invasion ? Did it not issue in a glorious deliverance ? But every part of this description was fully verified by the Roman dispersion.

RULE III.

State of the Jews.

THE history of the Jews is more or less mingled with the greater part of the Old Testament prophecies. They are sometimes represented as in a state of dispersion ; at other times, as restored to the favour of God ;—gathered from among the nations ;—brought back to their own land ; or as enjoying all happiness in it.

Some one or other of these circumstances annexed to a section of prophecy, at the beginning or end, or blended with it throughout, shews, that the events contained in that section of prophecy shall be contemporary with the state of the Jewish nation represented.

Thus Joel iii. begins with these expressions, "For behold in those days, and in that time; when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem," to shew that the several events detailed in that chapter shall begin to be accomplished about the time that the Jews shall return to the land of Judea, from their dispersion.

The pointed prophecy concerning the fall of Babylon, contained in the 50th and 51st chapters of Jeremiah, is blended throughout with the return of the Jews. Those two events are related in alternate stanzas, to shew that they shall be contemporary and progressive.

The prophecy concerning Gog and his army, laid before us in the 38th and 39th chapters of Ezekiel, is mingled with accounts of the happiness of the Jewish nation, represented as then living in their own land, in security and affluence, to shew, that the invasion of Gog shall take place a long time after their resettlement in Judea. As the time of each remarkable circumstance respecting the Jewish nation is fixed in the Apocalypse, any of those circumstances connected with a prophecy, shews the particular place of that prophecy in the series of events, and consequently enables us to ascertain its relation to other

other events, which either precede, are contemporaneous with, or follow after it.

But a difficulty will readily occur in the application of this rule. All the Old Testament prophets, three excepted, lived before the Babylonish captivity: When they mention the desolate state of the Jews, the question is, Whether they mean their captivity in Babylon, or their dispersion by the Romans? for both were future events, at the time the prophecy was uttered. And when they mention their resettlement in Judea, it is a question, Whether they understand their past return, or their future restoration.

In order to remove the difficulty, I would observe, that all the circumstances not fulfilled in the former event certainly refer to the latter. As the prophecies which are yet to be accomplished are only connected with their future restoration, the following circumstances respecting that event will occur to the attentive reader of the prophecies, and clearly distinguish it from their return from Babylon.

The ten tribes, who have had no national existence since their captivity by Salmanazar, shall return together with the two tribes. The kingdoms of Israel and Judah shall form one great united nation¹.

They

(1) Ezek. xxxvii. 15—22. Jer. iii. 18. Isa. xi. 13.

They shall be gathered from all countries and corners of the earth¹; whereas formerly they returned from one country only.

They shall be thoroughly cleansed from their sins²; whereas they brought much of their perverseness along with them from Babylon³.

They shall return under the Messiah their Leader⁴.

They shall possess all the land, as in the most flourishing days of David and Solomon, and more extensively than in their time⁵, which certainly was not the case on their return from Babylon.

Their possession of the land shall be perpetual⁶; whereas, after their return from Babylon, they were dispossessed by the Romans.

The

(1) Isa. xl. 11. Jer. xvi. 15. Jer. xxiii. 3. and 8.
Jer. xxxi. 8, 9.

(2) Isa. i. 25. Jer. xxxiii. 8. Ezek. xx. 38.

(3) Ezra ix. Neh. x.

(4) Isa. xi. 10. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Jer. xxx. 9. Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24.

(5) Jer. xxxiii. 7. Ezek. xxxvi. 11. Ezek. xlvi. 13—21. Obad. ver. 19, 20.

(6) Isa. liv. 7—11. Ezek. xxxvi. 12—15. Ezek. xxxvii. 25—28.

The service of God performed among them shall be spiritual, quite distinct from their former manner of serving him¹.

The nations shall flow into them², and they shall propagate the truth among the nations³.

Their temporal happiness shall be great and permanent⁴.

RULE IV.

The Millennium.

THE Millennium is a period which the prophets introduce frequently, and describe largely. The peculiarity of their description and phraseology, when they mention this subject, will enable the attentive reader to recognise it, wherever it is introduced. The circumstances of the description can suit no other time.

They

(1) Jer. iii. 15, 16. Jer. xxxi. 31—34. Jer. l. 5. Ezek. xvi. 62. and xxxvi. 26, 27.

(2) Jer. iii. 17. Isa. ix. 3—16 Zech. viii. 22.

(3) Isa. ii. 3. Isa. lxvi. 19. Jer. iv. 2. Mic. v. 7.

(4) Isa. xxx. 23, 24. Jer. xxxi. 12. Ezek. xxxiv. 26, 27. Amos ix. 13. Zech. viii. 12.

From these quotations, and many others which might be added, we see that several passages refer to the future, which inattentive readers apply to the past.

They describe it as a period in which Jews and Gentiles shall be united as members of the church, and admitted as joint worshippers into the house of God. Before the Christian dispensation, the Jews only were admitted. By the promulgation of the Gospel, the middle wall of partition was broken down, and the Gentiles were introduced. The admission of the Gentiles was from the beginning of the Gospel the great stumbling-block to the Jews, who have ever since been *aliens* from the household of faith, and, according to the prophets, they shall continue in that state until the Millennium.

They describe it as a period of much outward glory to the church, by her extending her dominion over all nations, as well as by the regularity and stability of her government and discipline. Now, previous to the Christian dispensation, she was confined to one nation. In the beginning of the Christian dispensation, she was for some time without the support of civil government, and subject to persecution. When she received a legal establishment, she began to be corrupted, and in process of time, instead of the chaste spouse of Christ, appeared to be "the mother of harlots." From that period, she has ceased to appear as one great united body. Notwithstanding the purity of individuals, and of some public establishments since the Reformation,

nation, there is no union betwixt the several national churches in their outward polity, neither will there be any until the Millennium.

The prophets represent it as a period of superior grace, holiness and happiness.

These circumstances, peculiar in themselves, are set forth in uncommon language. The outward glory of the church is represented by a temple regularly built¹, and a city reared of precious stones². The abundance of grace bestowed at that period, is compared to a copious river issuing from the temple³, or running through the street of the city⁴. The moral change wrought by it, on the temper and behaviour of men, is set forth by a renovation of the natural world⁵, or by taming the fiercest animals, as wolves and lions⁶. The happiness of that period is represented by giving additional

light

(1) Ezek. xl. xli. xlii.¹

(2) Isa. liv. 11, 12. Rev. xxi. 10—21.

(3) Ezek. xlvi. 1—12. Joel iii. 18.

(4) Psal. xlvi. 4. Rev. xxii. 1, 2.

(5) Isa. lxxv. 17. Isa. lxvi. 22. Rev. xxi. 1.

(6) Isa. xi. 6—9. Isa. xxxv. 9. Isa. lxv. 25.

'light to the heavens', and greater fertility to the earth².

When we learn by any of these circumstances, that the prophet has the Millennium in view, as the place of the Millennium in the series of events is known from the Apocalypse, it will prove a key to open up the meaning of the other events connected with it, in the same section of prophecy; for their relation to each other, and their place in the general order of events are known, from their relation to the Millennium.

RULE V.

In judging of the sentiments of any writer, it is necessary to consider the connection of his discourse. An expression by itself may appear ambiguous, which, from the connection with what precedes or follows it, may have an obvious and determined meaning. This rule is applicable to the prophets. Their meaning appears obvious; at any rate the mind rests

(1) Isa. xxx. 26. Isa. ix. 19. Rev. xxi. 23. Rev. xxii. 5.

(2) Ezek. xxxiv. 26, 27.

rests in it as highly probable, when the connection can be traced, through a whole discourse or section of prophecy. But it is more difficult to trace the connection in them, than in any other writers, sacred or profane. The difficulty arises partly from the nature of the subject. When they treat of events still future to us, they are wrapt up in a venerable gloom, and of them it may be said, That “we know but in part, and see darkly as through a glafs.” It cannot be expected, that we should trace the connection as clearly as when the Providence of God has already proved the comment on the prophecy. But much of the difficulty arises from the peculiar manner of the prophets. I shall therefore note some of their peculiarities of method and expression, which I hope will lessen the difficulty, and enable the attentive reader to trace the connection, when otherwise he would have lost it.

I. THE prophets give several parallel views of the same period of time; that is, they run over the same events, yet so as to observe the same order of events in each view, and to enlarge in one view on events slightly touched in another. Mede¹ has demonstrated that there are such pa-

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(1) In his *Clavis Apocalyptic*.

rallel views or synchronisms in the Apocalypse. But this method is not peculiar to the Apocalypse. The Prophet Isaiah, from the 40th chapter to the close of the book, gives several parallel views of the period from the first promulgation of the gospel to the Millennium. Each parallel view begins with some account of the Messiah, or the circumstances of the time in which he appeared, and ends with an account of the Millennium. The connection of the parts in each parallel view, shews the order of events as they have been or shall be accomplished. By laying together the corresponding places in each parallel view, we acquire a tolerable knowledge of any particular event considered apart.

II. THE prophets briefly relate events, and afterwards enlarge on the whole or a part of the period to which they are referred. This method is clearly discerned in the Apocalypse. In chap. xi. 15--18. we have a brief description of the whole events included in the seventh trumpet; that is, from the time of its sounding to the end of the world; which events are afterwards more fully treated of. In Rev. xvi. we have the events of the seven vials briefly summed up in their order. Chap. xviii. throughout, and chap. xix. 1--4. give an enlarged view of the fifth vial. Chap. xix. 5--10. gives further light on the sixth vial. And chap.

chap. xix. 11--21. enlarges on the seventh vial or the battle of Armageddon¹. But the same method seems to have been used by the Old Testament Prophets. Isaiah (chap. liv. 1--3.) gives a short account of the admission of the Gentiles into the church ; the prophet then passes on to the conversion of the Jews. He returns again, and enlarges on the admission of the Gentiles chap. Iv. 1--11. The propriety of representing future events in this manner will appear, if we reflect that without the brief narrative prefixed, we could never trace the connection ; and so we should remain strangers to the order of events ; and without the after enlargement, our knowledge of each particular event would be scanty and deficient.

Sometimes they narrate the series of events briefly, and enlarge only on the concluding event ; in which case the narrative prefixed, answers the purpose of a chronological kalendar. Thus, in the 2d chapter of Daniel, the four metals of the image mark the progress of time along the four universal monarchies, down to the Millennium, described in verse 44. So (in Dan. vii.) the four beasts carry on time until the little horn appears, which is largely described, as to its character, duration, and destruction.

III.

(1) See this proved in Mede's *Clavis Apocalyptic*.

III. THE prophets sometimes stop short in describing the progress of events, and introduce matter which, at first view, appears foreign to the subject. Upon investigation, it will be found that they pause to answer objections which naturally occur from their subject, and are tacitly understood, though not expressed.

The design of prophecy, as well as of every other part of Scripture, is to convince men of the truth of what God has revealed, and thereby to rectify the heart, and reform the life. In order to work a thorough conviction, it is necessary not only to state facts, but to remove objections. When the Spirit of prophecy foresaw objections which would have weight, he proceeds instantly to solve them, without formally stating them.

Thus Isaiah (chap. xxviii. 7--22.) shews the rejection of the Messiah by the Jewish nation, and the consequent desolation brought on them by the Romans. In order to vindicate the justice of God in this dispensation of his providence, the prophet answers (from verse 23. to the close) the great objection of the Jews to the Christian dispensation, and their apology for rejecting it, namely, the removal of the Mosaic \mathbb{A} conomy. He foresaw that they would consider it as inconsistent with the wisdom of God, first, to have appointed it, and afterwards to have abolished

abolished it. The objection is answered by an allusion to the practice of the husbandman. He first plows, then sows; so the Mosaic *Æconomy* was a preparation for the Gospel. He suits the seed to the soil, the threshing instrument to the seed; he uses one instrument to thresh, another to grind: Changing the instrument in the progress of his work, is the effect not of folly, but wisdom. It was from the beginning the plan of Infinite Wisdom, to adapt the mode of instruction, in the several ages of the Church, to the capacities of mankind, and to change the Mosaic for the Christian Dispensation.

The prophet Isaiah (xl. 9.—11.) describes the ministry of the Apostles; he removes (ver. 12.—17.) the objections of the Jews to the Messiah. As, the meanness of his outward appearance, answered, (verse 12.) by turning round to the works of creation, and asking, Who made them? The folly of his cross answered, (verse 13, 14.) by asserting the superior wisdom of God, in the scheme of redemption, and the folly of setting up human wisdom in opposition to it. The fear of the Romans answered (verse 15.) by declaring the insignificance of all nations, in comparison of Him whom they rejected. A conceit that sacrifices were sufficient to atone for sin, and that the death of the Messiah was therefore unnecessary,

unnecessary, answered, (verse 16.) by asserting that the sacrifices of brute animals, enjoined by the law, were in themselves absolutely insufficient to atone for sin.

Isaiah (chap. xlix. 1.—23.) gives a view of events in their order, from the promulgation of the gospel to the restoration of the Jews. At the 24th verse he stops short, and answers objections which would naturally occur against the restoration he had promised. He continues to answer several objections in the whole of the 1st chapter, and in chap. li. from the beginning to verse 9.

At other times the prophets interrupt the detail of events, in order to make a practical application of some important fact foretold ; showing the influence it ought to have on those who hear it, but especially on those who see it accomplished, according to their several situations. Thus, the prophet having shewed the conversion and restoration of the Jewish nation, (Isaiah xli. 1.—20.) he breaks off (verse 21.) by an animated address to the adherents of every false religion, summoning them to produce any such evidences of divinity in the deities they worship, as the true God has given in the prediction and accomplishment of those important facts, respecting the Jewish nation. We find a similar address on the same event, chap. xliv.

9.—20. The same prophet having shewed the progress of the gospel among the Gentiles, on its first promulgation, (xlii. 10.—16.) he breaks off the detail of events, to denounce the judgments of God against the heathen nations, who retained their idolatry ; then turning round to the Jews, in a pathetic address, he represents their inexcuseableness in rejecting the Gospel, and the justice of the calamities which were in consequence entailed upon their nation¹, (ver. 18.—23.)

IV. THERE are sudden transitions in the prophets ; that is, they rapidly pass from one event to another, very remote as to the time of its accomplishment, from that mentioned immediately before. However, a minute attention to the passage, and the comparing it with other passages, in the same prophet, will enable us to trace

(1) Many instances of this kind could be produced, out of all the prophets ; and in them we ought to admire the wisdom of the Spirit, who dictated the word of God. The future events foretold relate only to one period ; but the practical remarks with which they are interspersed are equally profitable in all periods. The literal meaning of the events predicted, and a knowledge of their coincidence with the prophecy, may be acquired only by a few ; but the practical remarks are level to the capacity of all ; so that ‘ the word of God,’ even in the darkest passages, ‘ maketh wise the simple.’

trace the connection of the writer's ideas, and prevent our misapprehending the narration, so far as to imagine, that the last event shall quickly succeed the preceding in the accomplishment.

Thus (Isa. lxi. 1.—3.) the prophet describes the personal ministry of the Messiah, for so our Lord applies it, (Luke iv. 17.—21.) At the 4th verse, the prophet suddenly passes on to the restoration of the Jewish nation, which takes place at the Millennium. Betwixt the personal ministry of the Messiah and the Millennium, no less than two thousand years elapse. Is any apt to suppose, that the latter event quickly succeeds the former? Let him carefully peruse the prophet, from the 40th chapter, and he will find, in the several parallel views of the same time, that the rejection of the Jews, the admission of the Gentiles into the church, the promulgation of the gospel among all nations, constantly intervene betwixt the personal ministry of the Messiah and the Millennium. In the passage where the transition is made, he says, “They (that is the restored Jews) shall build “the old wastes,—repair the desolations of “many generations.” These expressions imply, that many generations should intervene betwixt the personal ministry of the Messiah and the restoration promised, during which time the land

land should lie waste. In a word, the design of the prophet is to shew, that the Jews must submit to the Messiah, and receive the Gospel, previous to the restoration which he describes ; so that the connection of his ideas is more easily discerned, by his leaving out the intermediate events.

The prophet Daniel (xi. 5--35.) gives an accurate detail of the treaties and wars betwixt the kingdoms of Egypt and Syria, from the partition of the Grecian monarchy among the successors of Alexander the Great, down to Antiochus Epiphanes, whose history he concludes ver. 35. He immediately proceeds (ver. 36.) to give an account of the great Antichrist, who should appear in the latter times of the church. But here the connection obviously appears to be the similarity of character. He shews Antiochus Epiphanes as the greatest enemy of the true religion, who should appear under the Mosaic dispensation, after his own time ; he next points out Antichrist, as the greatest enemy to the true religion, who should appear under the Gospel dispensation. It is not necessary to suppose, that the latter should quickly succeed the former. The prophet has sufficiently guarded against such a mistake, (chap. vii.) There he notes the time of the great Antichrist's appearance, by the revolutions of the four universal monarchies. He not only shews the third

dissolved, of which the dominion of Antiochus Epiphanes made a part ; but the fourth which succeeded it, divided into several separate independent kingdoms, among which arose the little horn prefiguring Antichrist.

V. Many of the prophecies have two events in view at the same time. The prophets represent remote and more illustrious events, in preceding and less important transactions, while the language happily conforms itself to both events. “ It is, as it were, a robe of state for the one, “ and only the ordinary accustomed dress of “ the other.” Making allowance for a mixture of hyperbole, it may be accommodated to the nearer event ; in its plain and literal sense, it is applicable to the more remote event. Thus, Psal. lxxii. appears from the title to foretel the glory of Solomon’s kingdom, but under that type adumbrates the superior glory of the Messiah’s reign.

The prophecy of Joel (ii. 28--32.) concerning the effusion of the Spirit, is applied to the apostolical age, (Acts ii. 16--21.) ; but from the connection of the passage with what goes before, it seems to point likewise to a period still future, the conversion of the Jewish nation, which precedes the Millennium. Several prophecies concerning

cerning the fall of Babylon, and the return of the Jews from thence, particularly the prophecy contained in the 50th and 51st chapters of Jeremiah, look forward to the fall of mystical Babylon, and the return of the Jews from their present dispersion. The prophecies of Ezekiel concerning Tyre, chap. xxvii. and of Nahum concerning Nineveh, seem to have an aspect to papal Rome; and that of Ezekiel, chap. xxviii. concerning the prince of Tyre, refers to the ruler of papal Rome. The prophecy of Isaiah (chap. xxii. 15--25.) respecting the expulsion of Shebna, and the investiture of Eliakim with the office of treasurer, points to the fall of Antichrist, and the visible establishment of Christ's kingdom, as the consequence of it. One part of the prophecy is thus applied, (Rev. iii. 7.) and the sense of the other part is established by the connection. The authority of the New Testament directs to such a twofold meaning of prophecy. The expressions used, Isaiah xlvi. 23. "Unto me" "every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear," are applied to the effect of the Gospel on the hearts and lives of those who receive it, Phil. ii. 10. and to the submission of enemies as well as friends, before a throne of judgment, Rome. xiv. 11.

VI. It is customary with the prophets in describing the latter enemies of the church, to call them by the names of her former persecutors. This, at first view, occasions a misapprehension of the prophet's meaning. When we find the actors in any particular scene described to be nations that have no longer an existence in the world, we are apt hastily to conclude, that the prophecy respects the past, not the future. But if by any of the rules already laid down, (for instance, the state of the Jews or the Millennium connected with the prophecy,) we learn, that it points to the latter ages, we ought to consider the names of the actors as a disguise, and referring the prophecy to its proper place, we shall find that the sense is both intelligible and clear.

That the prophets do make use of such disguise, is evident, from the term Babylon being used in the Apocalypse¹, to signify Rome, and from the description of the same city as spiritually Sodom and Egypt².

This artifice was partly necessary; for as the latter enemies of the church had no name or existence when the prophet wrote, as they derived their names afterwards from languages, having little or no affinity with that of the prophet, How could he convey to us their names intelligibly

(1) Rev. xvii. and xviii. *passim.*

(2) Rev. xi. 8.

intelligibly in his own language ? It was an easy matter for the Spirit of God to have revealed the name of each, and for the prophet to have written them ; but that name could only have had a certain similarity in found to the real name ; it would have been readily referred to a Hebrew origin ; and this would have involved the most attentive reader in inextricable difficulty¹. But supposing this artifice not absolutely necessary, it was highly expedient. A certain degree of obscurity is competent to prophecy, to prevent its interference with the completion, and to try the sincerity of those who believe it, by affording exercise to their time and talents, in discovering its meaning. Now, the lowest degree of obscurity is that which withholds the names of the persons concerned, when their actions or sufferings are minutely described.

It is not always easy to investigate, nor is it perhaps material to know the reasons which induce the prophet to use the name of one ancient persecutor in preference to that of another. But in general, he seems to have in view a certain resemblance

(1) Calling Cyrus by name, Isa. xlvi. will not overturn this argument. The affinity betwixt the Hebrew and the Persian languages, as well as the actual existence of the name in both languages, rendered it abundantly intelligible ; but neither of these circumstances can apply to the latter enemies of the church.

resemblance of character ; and when the character described is complex, he calls it sometimes by one name, sometimes by another.—Thus Rome is called Babylon, for her oppression of the people of God ; Sodom for her impurity ; Egypt for her idolatry ; and by the Old Testament prophets, Tyre for her traffic, Idumea or Edom for her carnal relation to Christians, by professing their religion. By this rule, it appears, that the song of triumph for the fall of the king of Babylon, (Isa. xiv.) refers wholly to the head of mystical Babylon ; the destruction of Idumea, (Isa. xxxiv.) to papal Rome ; and the destruction of Pharaoh and his allies, recorded, Ezekiel xxxii. 17.—32. to Antichrist and his adherents, in the battle of Armageddon. The prophet sometimes changes the name in the same discourse, to hint, I suppose, that we are not to take it literally. Thus, what is said of the king of Babylon, Isa. xiv. 4.—23. is with the same breath said of the Assyrian, ver. 23.—27. to shew that neither a Babylonian nor Assyrian is literally intended, but one in whom the characters of both unite. At other times, the prophet repeats the same expressions, in two different sections of prophecy, but varies the name of the person to whom they are applied. Thus the same expressions applied to the King of Edom, Jer. xlix. 19. are repeated, Jer. l. 44. and applied

plied to the King of Babylon, with a design to shew that the name is a disguise, and that the two passages refer to the same persons, and the same times.

Another reason by which the prophets seem to be led to the choice of a name, in describing the latter enemies of the church, is, to point out the country they inhabit when the prophecy is accomplished. Thus in the description of Gog and his forces, Ezekiel xxxviii. the names of the sons of Noah, among whom the earth was first divided, are introduced, to shew that these enemies shall come from the countries which the persons mentioned originally possessed. The prophet Daniel is directed by this reason, in describing the subjects of the blasphemous King, Dan. xi. 43. And the prophet Ezekiel seems to be influenced by the same reason in enumerating the allies of the same power, Ezekiel xxxii. 22.—30.

VII. THE prophets describe the spiritual worship enjoined by the Gospel, in terms borrowed from the Mosaic Economy. This is obvious from the use of these terms in the New Testament. The Temple of God is put for the Church¹; devout affections are called spiritual sacrifices;

(1) 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. Eph. ii. 20, 21. 2 Thess. ii. 4.

sacrifices'; vials of odours or incense, signify prayer²; The use of these terms, therefore, in any particular prophecy, must not prevent our applying it to the Gospel times, if there are other reasons which direct us so to apply it.

Upon the same principles, the terms in which gross outward idolatry is described, may be used to denote any false religion, or even wicked desires. So the apostle calls "Covetousness" "idolatry³."

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(1) Heb. xiii. 16 1 Peter ii. 5.

(2) Rev. v. 8.

(3) Col. iii. 5.

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WHICH ARE NOT YET ACCOMPLISHED.

PART II.

Observations on their Dates.

CHRONOLOGY is justly reckoned one of the eyes of history. Prophecy is the history of events, previous to their accomplishment; and therefore has its chronological calendar annexed. The time of the most remarkable events is fixed; and this has a twofold effect, in establishing the faith and patience of the people of

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God.

God. Before the accomplishment, they are not to doubt of the completion, nor be impatient in waiting for it, because the time appointed is not yet come. Of every scripture-prophecy it may be said, “ The vision is for an appointed time, “ at the end it shall speak, and not lie.” After the accomplishment, the time being found to coincide with the circumstances foretold, will afford additional evidence to the rational mind of the divine original of the prophecy.

But though prophecy has its calendar, difficulties will occur in the application of it. Numbers are used sometimes in a mystic sense, sometimes in their ordinary meaning. The circumstances of any event predicted may go a great way to discover in what sense they are to be received ; but the event itself, when accomplished, can alone determine their meaning with absolute certainty. If we did know with absolute certainty the precise meaning, whether mystic or literal, of each number used in prophetic description, such knowledge would enable us to discover the relative situation of events ; that is, the difference of time betwixt one event and another ; yet still it would be difficult to adjust them to the ordinary computation of time ; that is, to shew in what particular year of the Christian æra, this or that event shall be accomplished.

plished'. But if any one event in the series can be with certainty reduced to the years of the common computation, so may every other.

SECTION I.

Time in which the Reign of Antichrist began.

ONE event is so important, that it engrosses a great part of the prophecies which regard the latter days. I mean the kingdom of Antichrist; and many of the calculations used in them are dated from the commencement of his reign. Though it is no longer a question with Protestants who have directed their attention to the prophecies, who Antichrist is, yet various opinions are still held with respect to the beginning of his kingdom.

Some date the beginning of Antichrist's kingdom from the Bishop of Rome's apostacy in articles of faith; others from his assuming the title of Oecumenical Patriarch; but others, and I think with greater propriety, from the period in

(1) From these observations, the candid reader will see that the principles laid down respecting the dates of events, are not to be considered as dogmatical assertions, but as probable conjectures. I do not imagine that the dates are equally clear with the events.

in which he attained the temporal sovereignty. My reasons for adopting this opinion, are these:

1. The little horn representing Antichrist is said to continue “a time and times, and the dividing of time,” (Dan. vii. 25.); that is, three years and a half, as it is explained Rev. xii. 6.—14. Now, whether these years be taken for natural or prophetic years, they signify the duration of a temporal kingdom or civil dominion; for the ten horns mentioned in the same representation, certainly signify kingdoms, or distinct territories of the Roman empire; the fitness of the emblem therefore requires that the little horn be a kingdom or distinct territory of the same empire. Again it is by understanding it thus, that we learn why it is called a little horn, while it had “a mouth that spoke great things.” In point of territory, the Bishop of Rome is but a petty prince; but the time has been, when he caused every crowned head in Europe to tremble on his throne. Farther, three horns were plucked up by the roots, to make room for the little horn. These, according to the best interpreters, are the Dutchy of Rome, the Exarchate of Ravenna, and the kingdom of the Lombards. Now these were overturned to establish the pope’s temporal dominion. All the circumstances of the description, therefore, shew that Antichrist

tichrist is termed a horn, on account of his temporal sovereignty; that the continuance of the little horn is, in other words, the duration of that sovereignty; which period must commence with the time in which the Bishop of Rome acquired it, and not before.

2. I argue from Revelation xiii. 5. where it is said of Antichrist, that "power was given him to continue forty and two months." Forty-two months are precisely three years and a half. But who is said to continue for that time? You will find from the context, it is the seventh or last head of the beast, representing the Roman empire. Now the Bishop of Rome could not, with strict propriety, be termed the head of the Roman empire, while Rome and its territory were subject to any other prince, either the Emperor, Exarch, King of the Goths or Lombards; during all that period, the Bishop of Rome was but second in authority; but when he stept into the throne of the Cæsars, he may be justly reckoned the head of the empire. It is from that period, therefore, the prophecy begins to reckon the forty-two months of his reign.

3. The time of Antichrist's appearance is fixed, Revelation xiii. 18. "Herein is wisdom. " Let

“ Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast : for it is the number of a man ; and his number is six hundred three score and six.” Most interpreters, from Irenæus downwards, have considered this number, as containing the name of the beast in a cypher, which, when decyphered, is *LATEINOS*², that being the proper name in Greek of the western Roman empire. I have no objection to this interpretation, as far as it goes ; but I apprehend, it is not the whole of the truth. As the seven heads contain a double mystery. shewing the place of Antichrist’s empire, and the time of its erection, so likewise does the number 666. It shews the place, by giving the name, and fixes the time, by directing us to add to the date of the vision 666 of that kind of number commonly in use among men to calculate

(1) In Greek, numbers are marked by the letters of the alphabet, and the name is decyphered thus :

λ = 30
α = 1
τ = 300
ϵ = 5
ι = 10
ν = 50
σ = 70
ς = 200

culate distant periods, that is years. Now the Apostle received the vision about the year 90¹, to which, if you add 666, it will bring you down to the year 756; and in that year the Bishop of Rome was invested with the rights of a temporal sovereign. With that period, therefore, commenced the forty-two months of his reign.

4. These sentiments are confirmed, when I reflect, that the duration of the temporal sovereignty is a proper subject of prophetic calculation, because it is a notour event. The beginning of it is well known, so must the end. If therefore it measures a period of forty-two months,

(1) The commonly received opinion is, that the Apocalypse was written in the year 96. But all allow, that the Apostle John was banished to the isle of Patmos by Domitian, who ended his reign and perfecution together in the year 96; therefore the presumption is, that the Apostle received those visions previous to that æra. Mosheim observes from Hegesippus, that Domitian's persecution began in 92, and that the Emperor's chief reason to persecute Christians, was a fear that some of the relations of Christ would usurp the empire. If so, it is reasonable to suppose, that the Apostle John, the only one then alive who had seen Christ, the beloved disciple likewise, should be the chief object of the tyrant's jealousy, and the first victim of his rage, from which I think it is probable that he was banished to Patmos previous to the year 92.

months, the fall of it must carry conviction to every rational mind, in the least acquainted with the transactions of Europe. But if we date the time of Antichrist's continuance, from the Bishop of Rome's apostacy, the commencement of it is not so obvious. It was so gradual in its progress, that the most accurate historian cannot say what is the precise period at which it began. Accordingly, there is a confusion and embarrassment in the interpretations of those who date from that period ; their uncertainty with regard to the commencement, necessarily affecting their views of the completion.

If we date the forty-two months of the beast, from the period in which the Bishop of Rome attained the temporal sovereignty, there will be little difficulty in reducing them to the years of the common computation.

Aistulphus king of the Lombards took Ravenna, *A. D. 752.* Being in possession of the Exarchate, he claimed the Dutchy of Rome as a part of it. But the Romans being unwilling to acknowledge his claim, or pay tribute, he led his forces against Rome, *A. D. 754.* The Pope Stephen II. alarmed by the danger, applied to Pepin of France for protection. This Pope, and his predecessor Zachary, had laid Pepin under considerable obligations some time before.

before. For when Pepin, who was Mayor of the palace to Childerick, caused his lawful sovereign to be deposed, and had himself proclaimed in his stead, he applied and obtained from Zachary the sanction of the Roman Oracle to his usurpation, and Stephen confirmed the deed of his predecessor. In return for these services, Pepin led an army into Italy, *A. D. 755*, against the Lombards, conquered Aistulphus, and obliged him by a solemn treaty to renounce the Exarchate, which Pepin bestowed on Stephen and his successors in office, under the name of St. Peter's Patrimony. The next year Aistulphus violated, without remorse, a treaty into which he had entered with reluctance, and led his forces a second time against Rome. Upon this Pepin returned to Italy, and not only obliged Aistulphus to raise the siege of Rome, but besieged him in his turn in Ravenna, and forced him to execute the treaty, by renouncing the Exarchate, which Pepin again delivered over, by a grant to Stephen and his successors in office, laying the charter, together with the keys of the several cities belonging to the Exarchate, with much solemnity, on the altar of St. Peter, *A. D. 756*¹.

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(1) Segonius de regno Italiæ, 80. Mizeray's History of France, vol. i. p. 216.

S E C T I O N II.

Duration and End of Antichrist's Reign.

HERE the forty-two months of the beast's reign began. But in order to discover where they end, it is necessary to ascertain, whether they are to be taken in a literal sense, for three natural years and a half ; or in a mystic sense, putting a day for a year, in which case they amount to 1260 years. The defenders of the beast labour hard to establish the literal sense ; but the following reasons must convince the unprejudiced, that they are to be taken in a mystic sense :

1. This mode of calculation was familiar to the whole Jewish nation ; for as the law ordained every seventh year to be a year of rest, this naturally led them to reckon time by weeks of years, as well as weeks of days, and by parity of reason a day for a year.

2. This mode of calculation was commonly used by the prophets. Thus, there is an emblematical representation of a siege, (Ezekiel iv. 6.) ; and God commands the prophet to lie on his side forty days, to represent forty years ; for (says he) I have appointed thee each day for

for a year. Daniel's prophecy of seventy weeks (chap. ix.) is thus interpreted by Papists as well as Protestants, and must be so understood, to make it agree with the event. Indeed this mode of calculation was so common with the prophets, that if they mention a week or a year in its ordinary acceptation, it is with a note of distinction. So, Daniel (x. 2.) says he fasted "three full weeks," or as it is in the original, three weeks of days, to distinguish them from weeks of years; and when Isaiah would distinguish the natural from the prophetic year, he calls it "the year of an hireling," (xvi. 14. and xxi. 16.)

3. The circumstances of the representation must convince the unprejudiced, that the forty-two months of the beast are to be understood in a mystic sense; for his extensive dominion, and great authority, could not possibly be acquired in so short a period as three natural years and a half. It is said, that "power was given "him over all kindreds, and tongues, and na- "tions. And all that dwell upon the earth "shall worship him, whose names are not writ- "ten in the book of life," Rev. xiii. 7, 8. It is impossible to travel through the several na- tions of the earth in so short a period, much more to transport armies, and establish an em- pire,

pire, as Papists allege. Shall we have recourse to that interpretation which implies in it an impossibility, and reject what is well founded on scripture authority ? Again, the armour with which the prophecies have furnished Antichrist, are falsehood and feigned miracles : “ His coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness,” ^{2 Thes. ii. 9. 10.} Now these take a longer time, in extending his dominion, than force of arms ; so that the period allotted for it, if taken in a literal sense, is not sufficient.

I conclude, therefore, that the forty-two months allotted to the reign of Antichrist, ought to be reckoned after the manner of the prophets, a day for a year, making in all 1260 years. So if we add these to 756, the year in which he acquired the temporal sovereignty, they will bring us down to *A. D. 2016*, as the close of his reign. But in regard the calculation is made by months and days, as well as years, and that thirty days are reckoned to a month, and 360 to a year, it is probable the whole period is reckoned by years of that description ; so that the five days and odd hours which the common year has above the prophetic,

tic, should be deducted¹. These amount nearly to eighteen years, which being deducted from 2016, makes 1998, as the year in which the temporal sovereignty shall be taken away.

SECTION III.

Time in which the Ottoman Empire falls.

AT the same period, about the year 1998, falls the Ottoman empire. It is represented by the second wo, or sixth trumpet, Rev. ix. 13.—19. Now the forty-two months of the beast are contemporary with the 1260 days of the witnesses mourning prophecy; for their mourning is owing to his persecution. These days end with their resurrection; and immediately upon their resurrection, it is said, “The second wo is past,” Rev. xi. 14.

SECTION IV.

Time of the Vials in general.

WHEN the Pope's temporal sovereignty shall be taken away, and the Ottoman empire shall cease

(1) See Fleming's Discourses, Discourse I.

cease to exist, the seventh trumpet shall sound : For immediately after the words just quoted, “ the second wo is past,” it follows, “ behold “ the third wo cometh quickly, and the se-“ venth angel sounded.” Then begin the vials of God’s wrath to be poured out, for the reduction of the spiritual jurisdiction of Antichrist.

Mede¹ supposes that the first six vials are poured out before the seventh trumpet, and that the seventh vial is contemporary with the seventh trumpet. But that all the vials, the first as well as the last, follow after the seventh trumpet, will appear from the following reasons :

First, The regular order of the prophecy requires it. For as the seven trumpets are included in the seventh seal, or to speak more properly, are the unfolding of it ; so, in like manner, the seven vials are the unfolding of the seventh trumpet. The order of events is carried on by means of the seals, trumpets, and vials. But this order is repeatedly interrupted by the synchronal visions inserted for explication, and could not be with certainty resumed, but for this device. Whereas by the help of this device, the series of the prophecy is carried on distinctly, and the visions inserted for explication refer by internal marks, either to that

series

(1) Mede’s Clavis Apocalyp. p. 2. Synchronism iii.

series immediately, or to some other contemporary vision which has a reference to it. Now this admirable contexture is in a good measure destroyed, by supposing that any of the vials are poured out under the sixth trumpet.

Secondly, We are advertised, chap. viii. 13. of three wo trumpets. The fifth and sixth trumpets make the first and second woes, and they are minutely described ; but unless these vials are the wo of the seventh trumpet, it exists nowhere in this book.

Thirdly, The wo of the seventh trumpet is, by confession of all, the third and last ; and these vials are expressly called “ the last plagues,” because “ in them is filled up the wrath of God,” Rev. xv. 1. So that they must be the same ; or, in other words, the vials are the unfolding of the seventh trumpet. But if they are poured out under the sixth trumpet, then other plagues announced by the wo of the seventh trumpet follow after the last plagues, which is in direct contradiction to the text. Nor can this argument be evaded, by supposing with Mede, that the seventh vial is included in the seventh trumpet, though the others are not. Because all the vials are termed the last plagues, the first as well as the seventh : they are all of one kind, different degrees

degrees of the same punishment inflicted on the same subject, and cannot be separated : they are perfectly distinct as to their nature and object from the second wo, and therefore ought not to begin till the second wo ended ; for it is said, “The second wo is past, the third wo “cometh quickly.”

Fourthly, By Mede’s rule, the marks inserted in the prophecy, it is evident, that all the vials follow the seventh trumpet, and that none precede it. These internal marks may be fitly compared to the corresponding loops in the curtains of the tabernacle; by observing them, the Levites discovered the place of each separate curtain and joined them together, so as to form one whole tent. So by these marks, the attentive reader is able to discover the place of each separate vision, whether it carries on the series of the prophecy, or gives a collateral representation of times already mentioned, and to connect them so as to form one continued prophecy. Now I find, that after the seventh trumpet sounds, Rev. xi. 15. and a brief summary is given of the events contained in it, in the three following verses, it is said, vers. 19. “I “saw the tabernacle of the temple of God in “heaven opened.” This expression I consider as a mark inserted, like the loop in the edge of

the

the curtain, where the series of the narration is broken off. Accordingly, the same words are repeated, Rev. xv. 5. like the corresponding loop in the edge of the other curtain, then it is said, “ And the seven angels came out of the “ temple, having the seven plagues,” vers. 6.; which shews, that the first of these vials follows after the sounding of the seventh trumpet. That these two verfes compared together imply so much, I argue thus: None of these vials could be poured on the earth till the angels to whom they were entrusted came out of the temple; nor could the angels come out of the temple until it was opened, as appears from chap. xv. 1.; but the temple was shut during the forty-two months of Antichrist’s reign, and was opened only at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, chap. xi. 19.; therefore all the vials follow after the sounding of the seventh trumpet ¹.

It may not be improper to examine the reasons which induced Mede to conclude, that the first six vials are contemporary with the sixth trumpet, and the seventh vial with the sounding of the seventh trumpet. He had very properly observed, that the forty-two months of the beast’s

(1) See further on this subject, in Newton’s Dissertation on Prophecies, vol. ii. p. 302. 9th edit. Likewise Durham on the Revelation, p. 227. 4to edit.

beast's reign end with the close of the sixth trumpet, and that the vials are plagues on the beast and his followers. Then taking it for granted, that the beast could have no existence after the forty-two months were finished, he concluded that the vials must have been previously poured out, in order to bring him to his end, and consequently must have fallen in with the time of the sixth trumpet, beyond which the forty-two months do not extend. But the error of his reasoning consists, in supposing that the beast has no existence after the forty-two months are finished. These mark (as we have seen) the duration of his temporal sovereignty. Now, as he acquired an extensive spiritual supremacy previous to the temporal sovereignty, so after he is deprived of the temporal sovereignty, he shall retain a great measure of his spiritual supremacy, for the reduction of which the vials are poured out. The temporal sovereignty is but the pedestal on which the idol of spiritual supremacy was reared. After the pedestal is removed, the idol stands on its own legs, till by the repeated blows of Divine vengeance, represented by the vials, his very existence is annihilated ¹.

The

(1) I am aware that an objection will occur to many against this reasoning: Fleming (in his discourse concerning

The place of the vials in the series of events being thus discovered, the time they take up, or, in other words, the period which elapses from the sounding of the seventh trumpet, when they begin, to the commencement of the Millennium,

ing the fall of the Papacy) applies the fourth vial to the fall of the French monarchy ; and conjectures such fall shall take place in the year 1794. If the powers of Europe should this year acknowledge the independence of the French republic, Fleming's conjecture would be thereby established : And his application of the vial thus fulfilled will appear to many a more forcible argument for his interpretation than any reasons I can offer, to prove that none of the vials are yet poured out. In answer to this objection, I observe, that Fleming builds his conjecture on two grounds : The one is the fourth vial, which I consider to be a misapprehension ; the other is, that there are corresponding points in the rise and fall of the Papacy, each of them measured by a period of 1260 prophetic years. Proceeding on this ground, he observes, that Justinian left Rome to the management of the Pope in the year 552 ; adding to these 1260 prophetic, or 1242 civil years, brings us down to the year 1794, when he supposes the French monarchy, the great support of the Papacy, shall fall. Hear his own words : “ Whereas the present French king “ takes the sun for his emblem, and this for his motto, “ *Nec pluribus impar*, he may at length, or rather his successors, and the monarchy itself, at least before the year “ 1794, be found to acknowledge, that, in respect to “ neighbouring potentates, he is even *Singulis impar*.”

“ But

lennium, when they end, appears to be exactly seventy-five prophetic years. For it is highly probable, that the commencement of the Millennium is intended by Daniel xii. 12. “Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand

“ But as to the expiration of this vial, I do fear it will not be until the year 1794. The reason of which conjecture is, that I find the Pope got a new foundation of exaltation when Justinian, upon his conquest of Italy, left it in a great measure to the Pope's management, being willing to eclipse his own authority to advance that of this haughty prelate. Now this being in the year 552, this, by the addition of 1260 years, reaches down to the year 1811, which, according to prophetic accounts, is the year 1794.” Should, therefore, Fleming's conjecture be established by the event, it will not militate against my reasoning; because his calculation is founded on quite another principle, which I do not controvert.

Again, Fleming's general principle respecting the vials is the same with mine. He supposes that all the vials follow after the sounding of the seventh trumpet. Only in this we differ; he supposes the æra of the seventh trumpet to be past, at the Reformation. I suppose it is still future, and that it shall take place about the close of the twentieth century. At any rate, that it is still future, will appear with convincing evidence to one who reflects, that five contemporary events precede immediately the sounding of the seventh trumpet, of which not one is fully accomplished hitherto. These events are, The end of the 42 months of the beast;—of the 42 months in which the

Gentile

“ thousand three hundred and five and thirty “ days.” In similar terms the Millennium is described by the Apostle John, Rev. xx. 6. “ Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the “ first resurrection.” The difference betwixt this number and “ the time, times, and an half,” mentioned Dan. xii. 7. or (which is the same thing) of the 1260 years that close the reign of Antichrist, is just seventy-five years. And as the first of the vials is poured out immediately as the seventh trumpet sounds, at the close of the 1260 years, so the last is poured out before the Millennium

Gentiles tread the outer court;—of the 1260 days in which the witnesses prophecy in sackcloth;—of the 1260 days during which the woman remains in the wilderness;—of the second wo, or sixth trumpet.—Now, it is evident to any one who reflects on the state of Europe at the present moment, that none of these events are accomplished. The Pope still reigns; therefore the 42 months of the beast are not ended. Popery is the established religion of a great part of Europe; therefore the Gentiles still tread the outer court. Protestantism is persecuted in some parts of Europe; therefore the witnesses still prophecy in sackcloth. There is no union betwixt the several reformed churches; therefore the woman still remains in the wilderness. The Ottoman empire exists, a hindrance to civilization, and a scourge to Christianity; therefore the second wo is not past. From the whole I conclude, that the seventh trumpet has not yet been sounded; so that, on Fleming's own principles, none of the viale hays yet been poured out.

Millennium begins ; therefore the time they occupy is within the seventy-five prophetic years.

S E C T I O N V.

Time of the Destruction of Rome.

THE portion of the above period of seventy-five years belonging to each of the first four vials, I pretend not to determine. But the last three being more largely described, the time of pouring them out may be conjectured.

The fifth vial represents the destruction of the city of Rome. For it is poured out on the seat (or throne) of the beast, Rev. xvi. Now, it is said, Rev. xiii. 2. “ The dragon gave him “ (the beast) his power, and his seat (or throne), “ and great authority :” That is, the devil, who formerly persecuted the church, by his deputes the Roman Emperors, after their fall, gave Antichrist, not only their power and authority, but likewise their throne, namely, the city of their residence, to be his residence ; so that the seat signifies the imperial city, and the vial poured out on the seat must therefore affect the imperial city.—Rev. xviii. throughout is an enlarged account of the fifth vial ; and the sum of it is, “ Babylon is fallen, is fallen.” It will be allowed, that the terms Babylon and City, as used

used in the Apocalypse, sometimes signify the empire of Rome, rather than the territory within its walls; but by attending to the strain of the narration, particularly to the concluding verses of the 18th chapter, the unprejudiced must be convinced, that the terms Babylon and City, in that chapter signify the imperial city, and not the empire; and that the fall described is final and irrecoverable. Therefore I infer, that the fifth vial signifies the final destruction of Rome.

I conjecture, that this event shall take place eighteen years after the loss of the Pope's temporal sovereignty, that is, in the year 2016. My reasons for this opinion are, *first*, It must precede the sixth vial, which takes place (as we shall presently see) *A. D.* 2028; *secondly*, I observe two remarkable steps in the establishment of the temporal sovereignty. The first of these was *A. D.* 756, when the Pope received from Pepin of France a solemn grant of the Exarchate of Ravenna, wrested from the King of the Lombards. The second was in the year 774, when Charlemagne overturned the kingdom of the Lombards, and thus effectually established the Pope in the possession of the Exarchate, by destroying the power of his rival. Betwixt these two periods, eighteen years intervene. It is probable, therefore, there may be two periods in

the

the fall of the sovereignty corresponding with those in its rise, each measured by a period of 1260 years; so that if the year 1998 corresponds with the first, the year 2016 will correspond with the second. Though the first step gave the Pope a right to the sovereignty, it was only by the second he was secured in the peaceable enjoyment of his kingdom; so it is probable, that the first step in the fall may deprive him of his right, but the second only by destroying Rome, the bone of contention, shall effectually prevent all further claims to St. Peter's patrimony.

I am the more inclined to this opinion, because two persons divinely inspired calculate the seventy years captivity foretold by Jeremiah, (xxv. 11, 12.) from two different periods. Daniel (Chap. ix. 2.) computes from the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, when the captivity commenced, to the first year of the reign of Cyrus, when the captives began to return. Zechariah (Chap. i. 13. and Chap. vii. 1.—5.) reckons from the eleventh year of Zedekiah, which completed the captivity by the ruin of the city and temple, to the fourth year of Darius, in which the return of the captives was fully accomplished. Betwixt these two computations, there is a difference of about eighteen years, yet both are conformable to the truth, and alike pointed out by the spirit of prophecy.

SECTION VI.

Time of the Conversion of the Jews.

THE sixth vial signifies the conversion of the Jewish nation to Christianity. This appears,

First, From the expressions of the apostles. They are all borrowed from the prophets, and as used by them, they indicate a step preparatory to the return of the Jews from their great dispersion ; but that which prepares them for a return, according to the New Testament, is their receiving by faith the Messiah, whom they rejected. Thus, “drying up the Euphrates,” Rev. xvi. 12. is an allusion to the expressions of Isaiah, Chap. xi. 15. “And the Lord “shall utterly destroy the tongue (bay) of the “Egyptian sea, and with his mighty wind shall “he shake his hand over the river, and shall “smite it in the seven streams, and make men go “over dry-shod : And there shall be an high-way “for the remnant of his people.” And to those of Zechariah, (Chap. x. 11.) “And he shall “pass through the sea with affliction, and shall “smite the waves in the sea, and all the deeps “of the river shall dry up.” In both these passages, the expressions, from their connection with the context, obviously point out a step preparatory to the return of the Jews from their

great dispersion. Is it not therefore reasonable to infer, that the apostle uses them in the same sense? The prophets allude to the former deliverances of the Jewish nation, all of which were preceded by the drying up of waters. The deliverance from Egyptian bondage was preceded by drying up the waters of the Red Sea; the calamities of the wilderness had an issue, by drying up the waters of Jordon; and their return from Babylon was preceded by drying up the waters of the Euphrates. But those who receive the authority of the New Testament know, that their future return shall be preceded by a change in the moral world, greater than either of these was in the natural world; that their infidelity shall be removed, and that they shall cordially unite in the faith of the Messiah whom they have always rejected¹? "Preparing the way" is an allusion to the expressions of Isaiah (lxii. 10.) "Prepare ye the way of the people, cast up, cast up the high-way, gather out the stones, lift up a standard for the people," which, from the context, appear obviously to refer to the future return of the Jews. They are called "Kings," perhaps in allusion to their privileges as Christians, for all Christians are kings as well as priests to God²; or it may be on account of the

(1) 2 Cor. iii. 15, 16, 17. Rom. x. 26.

(2) Rev. i. 5, 6.

the superior glory of their church, after their conversion to Christianity. But for whatever reason they are so called, the expression is borrowed from the prophets. Thus, Isaiah (lxii. 3.) foreshewing the glory of the Jewish church, upon their conversion to Christianity, says, "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." So Zechariah says (ix. 16.) "And the Lord shall save them in that day as the flock of his people; for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon the land." They may be called "Kings of the east," either because their progenitor Abraham came from the east to Judea, or it may be a Hebraism, meaning ancient. Now, in the latter days, the denomination of ancient pertains to them, in preference to any other nation on earth.

Secondly, The illustration given of the sixth vial, Rev. xix. 5--10. contains several expressions which obviously point out the conversion of the Jewish nation. Thus, "the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." Embracing the true religion is frequently in scripture represented by the metaphor of a marriage-covenant; but particularly

ly the conversion of the Jews in the latter days is so denominated. “ Thy Maker is thine husband.—The Lord hath called thee, as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God,” Isa. liv. 5, 6. “ As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee,” Isa. lxii. 5. As these expressions refer to the future restoration of the Jews to the Divine favour, it is reasonable to suppose, that when the apostle uses the same expressions, he has the same times and persons in view. Indeed they are not applicable, with any propriety, to the Gentiles, on account of the time of this marriage. The Gentile church was married to Christ for two thousand years before. It cannot therefore be said of her, that her marriage is come at the sixth vial ; that it is “ then she made herself ready ; but it is perfectly applicable to the Jews ; for “ blindness is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in, and then all Israel shall be saved,” Rom. xi. 25, 26.

What is said, Rev. xix. 8. “ And to her it was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white ; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints,” manifestly alludes to the words of the parable, Matth. xxii. 11.—13. The primary design of the parable is to represent

present the rejection of the Jewish nation, and the cause of it. They are cast out from the marriage-feast, because they had not the wedding-garment. The Apostle John gives the counter part of the parable. He intimates that they are received again, by introducing them as parties in the marriage, arrayed with the wedding-garment. By the wedding-garment, we are to understand the righteousness of Christ. Their wanting the wedding-garment, signifies their infidelity, refusing to submit to his righteousness; for when the Apostle Paul shews the reason for which Israel was rejected, in plain terms, without a parable, he states it thus: "But Israel hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they fought it, not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.—For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Rom. ix. 31, 32. and chap. x. 3, 4. In like manner, the Apostle John explains what we are to understand by their having the wedding-garment, "the fine linen is the righteousness of saints," that is, a submission by faith to him whose name is "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS,"

“NESS,” Jer. xxiii. 6. I cannot doubt, therefore, that the Apostle John understands by the wife married to the Lamb, the conversion of the Jewish nation.

Thirdly, The kings of the east are they who execute the wrath of God on the beast and his adherents, at the seventh vial. This is obvious from the whole strain of the narration. Now, by the uniform testimony of the prophets, the Jews returning to their own land, under the auspices of the Messiah, are the instruments of divine vengeance on spiritual Babylon; at least they who give it the last and decisive blow. Hence it follows, that by the kings of the east the Jews must be intended; and in regard they cannot be partakers of the divine favour, nor instruments of divine vengeance, while their infidelity remains, we may infer, that the sixth vial, which prepares their way, intimates their conversion.

The time of their conversion I suppose to be intended by Daniel, chap. xii. 11. “And from “the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken “away, and the abomination that maketh deso-“late set up, there shall be a thousand two “hundred and ninety days.” He calculates from the beginning of the reign of Antichrist,
of

of whom he speaks in the language of the Old Testament. Now, as the reign of Antichrist ends in 1260 years, and the Millennium commences in 1335 years, this intermediate number of 1290 years refers to the conversion of the Jews. For, without all controversy, they are members of the Millennial church, in common with the Gentiles, and therefore must be converted before the 1335. Again, there is no event which we can suppose more interesting to a person of Daniel's disposition, than the restoration of his brethren to the favour of God. Besides, no event takes place betwixt the close of Antichrist's reign and the commencement of the Millennium, so important as the conversion of the Jews. It is therefore most probably the event intended. If so, it takes place thirty prophetic years after the fall of the Pope's temporal sovereignty ; and as the temporal sovereignty falls in the year 1998, their conversion shall happen in the year 2028¹.

I am the more inclined to this calculation, from the parallel stated by the Apostle, betwixt the conduct of God to the Jews, and his treatment of the Gentiles. “ For as ye (the Gentiles)

(1) The difference betwixt the civil and the prophetic year, is so small in the course of thirty years, that it is not material to reckon it, for it does not amount to one whole year.

“ tiles) in times past have not believed God,
“ yet have now obtained mercy through their
“ unbelief. Even so have these (the Jews)
“ now not believed, that through your mercy,
“ they also might obtain mercy. For God hath
“ concluded all (that is Jews and Gentiles) in
“ unbelief, that he might have mercy upon
“ all,” Rom. xi. 30.—32. To make the pa-
rallel exact, it is meet that the Jews should
remain in unbelief, as long as the Gentiles did.
The Gentiles remained excluded from the ordi-
nances of the true religion for 2000 years, from
the call of Abraham to the coming of Christ.
The Jews must remain in unbelief for the same
period.

The prophet Hosea appears to me to have the conversion of Judah and Israel in view. “ Af-
ter two days will he revive us ; the third day
“ he will raise us up, and we shall live in his
“ sight,” (chap. vi. 2.). Conversion is frequent-
ly represented in scripture by a resurrection.
The conversion of Israel, in particular, is de-
scribed by this figure, Ezek. xxxvii. A day in
prophetic language has various acceptations. It
is put sometimes for a natural day, sometimes
for a year ; and at other times it signifies a thou-
sand years, according to that of the Apostle Pe-
ter. “ One day is with the Lord as a thou-
“ sand years, and a thousand years as one day,”

(2 Pet.)

(2 Pet. iii. 8.) If taken in this last sense, it intimates, that the Jews, after remaining excluded from the ordinances of the true religion, and continuing strangers to the influences of the Spirit of God for 2000 years, shall immediately, as these end, partake of the Spirit of God, and be admitted to the privileges of his children. The unbelief of the Jewish nation commenced about the time of Christ's personal ministry; and he was considerably advanced in his personal ministry, in the 28th year of the common reckoning, which answers to the 32d year of his age. Their unbelief, therefore, ought to end about *A. D. 2028.*

SECTION VII.

Time of the Battle of Armageddon.

THE battle of Armageddon most probably will take place forty years after the conversion of the Jews. My reasons for this opinion are,

First, It requires a considerable time to collect the allies of the beast. The emissaries dispatched by the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, "go forth to the kings of the earth, and of the whole world." These kings must be persuaded by "lying wonders," Rev. xvi. 14. 16.

After they are persuaded severally, it requires time to concert together, and to bring up their forces to the place of Armageddon.

Secondly, It requires time on the other hand, to instruct the Jewish church, after their conversion, and previous to their settlement in Judea, when they are to be the model of the several Christian churches spread over the earth.

Thirdly, I suppose these words of the prophet Micah to be applicable to the period which elapses betwixt the conversion of the Jews, and their settlement in the promised land. “ According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvellous things,” (Mic. vii. 15.) As the days alluded to were forty years, and the Jews are again settled in Judea, in consequence of the battle of Armageddon, I conclude, that the like number of years shall run betwixt their conversion and the time in which the battle is fought. By adding therefore forty to the year 2028, we have 2068, as the year in which the battle shall be fought.

SECTION VIII.

Time in which the Millennium begins.

THE Jews take possession of the land given their fathers, in consequence of the victory obtained in the battle of Armageddon: But wars follow, in order to destroy the system of Babylon, and subdue the remaining power of the kings who supported it. I suppose these wars take up five years, which, in conjunction with the former forty, make up the number 1335. At the end of which the Millennium begins, (Dan. xii. 12.); that is 45 years after the conversion of the Jews; 75 years after the close of the 1260 years of Antichrist's reign, or the fall of the Pope's temporal sovereignty; and 1335 prophetic years from the commencement of his reign, in the year 756. At that period the Church being triumphant over the world, and peace universally established, the spirit of prophecy begins to reckon the Millennium, *A. D. 2073*; or, in regard the odd days and hours by which the civil year exceeds the prophetic, amount in 75 years to one whole year, by deducting these, the Millennium will commence *A. D. 2072*.

SECTION IX.

Time in which Gog appears.

THE duration of the Millennium is limited to a thousand years, six several times, in the 20th chapter of the Revelation, which induces me to consider it as a definite number. Again, I understand the number in its plain literal meaning; for though there are obvious reasons for concealing by mystic numbers, a long period of calamity, such as that in which Antichrist reigns, these cannot apply to a period of consolation, such as the Millennium is represented to be. The length of the period rather increases, than diminishes the consolation promised. Further, as the period is measured by years only, not by months or days, I take the number to signify so many civil, not prophetic years. So the Millennium will end *A. D.* 3072. A short time after the close of the Millennium, Gog appears. The exact year I pretend not to determine. At the end of the Millennium, “Satan is loosed out of his “prison, and goes out to deceive the nations,” Rev. xx. 7, 8. But some years will be necessary to give success to his delusions; and after his artifice has succeeded, some years more will be necessary to collect forces from the “four quarters of the earth,” to invade the Church.

After

After the destruction of Gog and his army, no event of importance occurs, till the last judgment. The whole period that elapses, from the end of the Millennium to the day of judgment, is expressly called “a little season,” (Rev. xx. 3.) But it may be so called absolutely, as including only a few years; or comparatively with the period that preceded it, and so may include a few centuries. Thus the seventh head of the beast is said to continue “a short space,” (Rev. xvii. 10.) that is, compared with the sixth head, though it continued near two centuries.

But the exact number of years that intervened, either betwixt the end of the Millennium and the day of judgment, or betwixt the destruction of Gog and the day of judgment, I know not; and no number has occurred to me, in the prophecies, by which to discover it with satisfying conviction. It would appear that God has been pleased to conceal the length of this last period, to keep the Church watchful, looking

(1) We are told, Ezek. xxxix. 12, and 14. that the people of Israel were “seven months” burying the bones of Gog’s army. I have no doubt but the person mentioned by the prophet, is the same introduced by the apostle at the close of the Millennium; and it is obvious, that burying the bones must be taken in a spiritual, not a literal sense. Perhaps, therefore, the seven months

may

looking for the appearance of the Judge ; and that having given so many demonstrations of his second coming, by the completion of prophecy in the ages that preceded, he will give no more till the last trumpet sounds.

may measure, in mystic numbers, the period that elapses betwixt the destruction of Gog and the day of judgment, making 210 prophetic years. However, candour obliges me to acknowledge that the conjecture is considerably weakened by what is said verse 9. of the same chapter, that they were seven years burning the armour of Gog's multitude.

A

K E Y

TO THE

P R O P H E C I E S,

WHICH ARE NOT YET ACCOMPLISHED.

PART III.

The Events foretold in them.

CHAP. I.

The present State of the World and the Church described in the Prophecies.

BEFORE I proceed to future events, it may not be improper to state the view given in the prophecies of this period in which we live. Such a view is necessary to trace the progress of events,

events, by shewing the links which, in the chain of Providence, connect the present with future times. Besides, if the view given of the Church and the World agrees with their state and condition in our times, this coincidence affords the strongest evidence that the prophecies which regard future times, shall be likewise accomplished in their season.

We are now in the year 1038 considerably advanced, in the period of 1260 years, allotted to the reign of Antichrist. Now, the remarkable circumstances of this period are the following :

SECTION I.

The Ottoman Empire.

THE plague of the sixth trumpet coincides with the latter part of this period, and continues to the conclusion of it, Rev. ix. 13.—21. “ And “ the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice “ from the four horns of the golden altar which “ is before God, saying to the sixth angel which “ had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which “ are bound in the great river Euphrates. And “ the four angels were loosed, which were pre-“ pared for a hour, and a day, and a month, “ and a year, for to slay the third part of men. “ And the number of the army of the horsemen
were

“ were two hundred thousand thousand : And
“ I heard the number of them. And thus I
“ saw the horses in the vision, and them that
“ sat on them, having breast-plates of fire, and
“ of jacinth and brimstone ; and the heads of
“ the horses were as the heads of lions ; and
“ out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke and
“ brimstone. By these three was the third part
“ of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke,
“ and by the brimstone, which issued out of
“ their mouths. For their power is in their
“ mouth, and in their tails : For their tails
“ were like unto serpents, and had heads, and
“ with them they do hurt. And the rest of
“ the men that were not killed by these plagues,
“ yet repented not of the works of their hands,
“ that they should not worship devils, and idols
“ of gold and silver, and brafs, and stone, and
“ of wood ; which neither can see, nor hear,
“ nor walk : Neither repented they of their mur-
“ ders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their for-
“ nication, nor of their thefts.” Every circum-
stance of this description has been verified, in the
ravages committed by the Turks, and in the es-
tablishment of the Ottoman Empire.

The Turks were at first four small dynasties, in the neighbourhood of the Euphrates, who at the time appointed by God, successfully pushed their conquests westward. It is well known,

that their army consisted chiefly of horsemen, and that they were remarkable for the use of gun-powder. The more we examine into their principles, government and manners, the more shall we be convinced, that as they have been, so they still are, a horrible scourge to the Christian world. Cruel in war, they have destroyed multitudes, and spread devastation by their arms: Inimical to the sciences and to every improvement, they have established ignorance, and resisted civilization, as far as their dominion extends: Brutal in their manners, they have trampled not only on the pure precepts of Christianity, but on the finer feelings of the human heart, and the ties by which mankind are united together in society, for the gratification of their lusts: Zealously attached to the false prophet Mahomet, in propagating his religion they have destroyed the souls of millions; “ their tails were like unto serpents, and with them they do hurt, ver. 19.” Now, “ the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail, *Isaiah ix. 15.*” Yet the justice of God, in continuing this scourge, is vindicated by the conduct of professed Christians. Of them it holds true at the present moment, “ the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils (demons,) and idols of gold and

“ and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood,
“ which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk.
“ Neither repented they of their murders, nor
“ of their sorceries, nor of their fornication,
“ nor of their thefts.” The Greek and Latin
Churches zealously propagate the demon-wor-
ship of the ancients, under the name of worship
given to saints and angels. They have establish-
ed image-worship by law; and a universal disso-
lution of manners prevails among them, by the
testimony of their own historians.

SECTION II.

The Antichristian Empire.

A second remarkable circumstance in the re-
presentation of this period, is the reign of Anti-
christ. It is accurately described, and laid be-
fore us in various passages of scripture; chiefly
in these,—Dan. chap. vii. verse 7. and 8. 20.—
25. ; chap. xi. verse 36.—39. ; 2 Theff. chap.
ii. verse 3.—12. ; 2 Tim. chap. iv. verse 1.—5. ;
Rev. chap. xiii. ; chap. xvii.

The prophecy in the first passage represents
four universal monarchies, successively following
each other; of which the Babylonian empire,
existing in the prophet's time, was the first. It
points

points out a remarkable circumstance in the fate of the fourth of these empires, " That it should not be followed by another universal monarchy, but should be divided into several separate independent kingdoms, represented by the ten horns." And that this state of things should continue till the reign of the saints, or the commencement of the Millennium. Accordingly the Roman empire, allowed by all historians to be the fourth universal monarchy, has been divided by the northern nations above a thousand years ago, into the several independent kingdoms of Europe ; princes have arisen since that division, ambitious of forming a universal monarchy. But He who regulates the balance of power, more effectually than the schemes of politicians, or the arms of contemporary princes, has uniformly disappointed their devices, and the order of things represented in the prophecy, has been preserved to the present moment.

The prophecy shews the particular part of the fourth monarchy, which should be thus divided into separate kingdoms. For it is said that the three first beasts had their lives prolonged, after their dominion was taken away ; and all the horns are represented as issuing from the head of the fourth beast. These two circumstances compared, imply that the original provinces of the fourth monarchy, those surrounding

rounding the imperial city, distinct from the original provinces of the three former empires, should be thus divided into separate kingdoms. Accordingly we ought to look for them not in Babylon, not in Persia, not in Greece, but in the European provinces of the Roman empire. There they have been erected. There they are still maintained. The same God who disappointed the European princes, affecting universal monarchy, set limits to the ravages of the Saracens, and the conquests of the Turks, so as to prevent effectually their disturbing that order of things which his word had foretold.

The prophecy further shews, “ That in the midst of, and contemporary with these kingdoms should be that of Antichrist, represented by the little horn ; that though a little horn, he had a mouth speaking great things, and a look more stout than his fellows ;” that it should be divers “ from the contemporary kingdoms ; that he should speak great words against the Most High, and think to change times and laws.” Accordingly the Papal dominion has arisen from the ruins of the fallen empire, and has existed among the kingdoms of Europe for a thousand years. The territory of this potentate is small, compared with the other divisions of the empire ; but his claims are unbounded, arrogating to himself authority over all created beings,

ings, in matters temporal and spiritual, as being the vicar of Christ, and the representative of God.

The nature of his government is different from that of the other kingdoms of Europe, having an ecclesiastical supremacy joined to the temporal power. His rage for propagating idolatry ; his intolerant spirit exerted frequently, extensively, and violently, in persecuting those who have adhered to God's written word ; his attempts to alter or annul the eternal laws of God, by dispensations and indulgencies, and to establish, by his own authority, as pretended head of the Church, a mode of worship diametrically opposite to that which pure Christianity enjoins, are facts which the annals of Europe fully ascertain.

“ These things were not done in a corner.”
“ He that runneth, may read.”

In the 11th chapter of Daniel, the spirit of prophecy having introduced the same arrogant opponent of the Deity mentioned before, illustrates more particularly the circumstances of his opposition ; that he should not “ regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women,” (or wives, as it might be rendered;) that instead of the God of his fathers, he “ should honour the god of forces, (God's protectors,) with gold and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things.” That he should succeed

succeed for the defenders or priests¹ of those gods-protectors, so as to cause them “ have rule over many, and divide the land among them for their reward.”

Now though the Pope, by his authority, has not established nominally the Pagan superstition of ancient Rome ; yet he has enjoined celibacy to the clergy, and such as devote themselves to a religious life ; instead of the demon-worship of the ancients, he has established that of saints and angels, under the notion of their being protectors to individuals, families, provinces, and kingdoms. He has persuaded men to build temples, and consecrate offerings to them ; and these offerings consist of gold, silver, precious stones, pleasant vessels, and ornaments of various kinds.

He

(1) I take the liberty of differing from Mede in his translation of this passage. The word *Asah* is repeatedly translated, *succeed*, in the former part of the chapter, particularly ver. 28. The word translated *strong holds*, is allowed to be a figurative expression here, and therefore equally applicable to the priests as to the temples ; but the sense of the passage restricts it to the priests. It could be no gain or reward to saints and angels, that temples were erected, and that they were worshipped , but it was certainly great gain to the priests. Besides, the construction requires this translation¹; for the particle *Le, for*, is joined to the word *Michtsui, defenders*, not to *Meham, protectors*, as it ought to have been, according to Mede's translation.

He has succeeded so far as to render the clergy that support his worship, objects of veneration to the multitude ; he has introduced them into the courts of princes as their confessors and counsellors, and procured a great part of the revenues and lands of Europe to be divided among them for their reward.

As the time approached when this extraordinary character should appear, the spirit of prophecy more clearly unfolded the circumstances respecting him, which were before wrapped up in mystery. After all that is revealed to Daniel, it remained still uncertain, Whether this opponent of the Deity should be a secret or an open enemy ? How his government should be divers from the other governments contemporary with him ? Upon what grounds he should claim such unlimited authority ? And by what means he should establish that authority in the world ? But we have an illustration of these particulars in the second Epistle to the Thessalonians, chap. ii. ver. 3--12. The passage affords to the unprejudiced mind a satisfactory answer to these several queries. The apostle intimates, “ that there should be a falling away first, and that then that man of sin should be revealed,” that is, that there should be an apostasy from the faith, which would produce Antichrist. At the same time, by the apostasy mentioned, he could

could not mean an absolute renunciation of the Christian name, for he calls it “a mystery of iniquity,” and hints that the beginning of it appeared in his own time: “It doth already work;” of course he must have in view Hymenæus and Philetus, and others, who fell away from the true doctrines and pure precepts of Christianity, while they adhered to the profession of it; so that the man of sin could not be an avowed, but secret enemy, who, under the mask of an outward profession of Christianity, should contradict its doctrines, and counteract its precepts.

Again, he represents him as “sitting in the temple of God.” The Jewish Doctors sat when they taught; the temple, in the language of the New Testament, signifies the church. By the expression, therefore, the apostle intimates, that this extraordinary person should claim and exercise the office of a pastor or teacher in that society, which is by profession the church of Christ. This ecclesiastical authority, together with the civil dominion represented in Daniel, must form a government different from that of the contemporary princes.

He further asserts, that “he sitteth in the temple of God, as God, shewing himself that he is God,” which implies that Antichrist would not expressly deny God, but claim a delegated

authority from him, as being his visible representative, at the same time using that authority, in opposing God and exalting himself. In perfect correspondence with this idea, the Bishop of Rome claims authority to alter the laws of God, as being the vicegerent of God on earth, the visible head of the church, and the visible judge of controversy.

The means by which Antichrist would establish his authority in the world, the spirit of prophecy lays before us in these expressions : “ His coming is after the working of Satan; with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all the deceivableness of unrighteousness :” That is, he shall arrive at his authority and power, not in the way in which princes commonly extend their dominions, by open force, but by secret fraud, particularly by pretending to work miracles¹, some of which shall be preternatural, performed by the operation of Satan², others shall be illusions, performed by flight of hand ; together with these, he shall use the several

(1) The Church of Rome, and her spiritual head assert that miracles are a mark of the true Church ; and chiefly by pretending to this power, they maintained their authority in the dark and superstitious ages.

(2) Aliquando fit in Ecclesia (inquit Lyrannus in Dan. c. xiv.), *deceptio populi maxima, in miraculis sanctis a fidelibus, vel eis adherentibus, propter lucrum temporale.* Miracula fieri hominibus ad imagines confluentibus,

several arts which cunning suggests to unrighteous men, to pervert or deceive the world'. In regard some doubts might occur, with respect to the nature of the falling away, or apostasy mentioned, 2 Theſſ. chap. ii. ver. 3. it is illustrated, 1 Tim. iv. ver. 1--3. "The Spirit speaketh " expressly, that in the latter times some shall " depart from the faith. Speaking lies in hy- " pocrify, having their conscience feared with " a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and com- " manding to abstain from meats, which God " hath created to be received with thanksgiv- " ing of them which believe and know the " truth." The apostasy therefore appears to be no express denial of the Christian name, for these apostates teach lies in hypocrify, a character not applicable to those who have laid aside the profession of Christianity. Besides, the prominent features of that apostasy are laid before us, to which the doctrines and practices of

bus, non unquam operatione demonum, ad fallendum in-
ordinatos cultoris. Deo permittente, exigente totum in-
fidelitate. (B. in Can. Missæ, c. 9. In sacramento),
(inquit Alex. de Hales, in 4. sent. 9. 53.) Apparet caro,
interdum hominum procuratione, interdum operatione
diabolica.

(1) The various arts of Papal Rome to establish her authority, as well as her success, cannot be expressed better than in Scripture language ; " By her sorceries were all nations deceived."

the church of Rome accord, as face answers to face in a glass.

These features are :—The doctrines concerning demons¹ ;—the prohibition of marriage ;—and the command to abstain from certain meats.

The Pagans asserted concerning their demons, that they were beings of a middle nature, betwixt the sovereign gods and mortal men² ; that they were agents and mediators betwixt the superior gods and men ; so Plato³, “ God is not approached by men, but all the commerce and intercourse bewixt gods and men are performed by the mediation of demons. Demons are reporters and carriers from men to the gods, and again from the gods to men, of the supplications and prayers of the one, and of the injunctions and rewards of devotion from the other.” That some of them were originally men, who, on account of their virtues, were raised to the rank of demons after their death ; so Hesiod inform us, “ That when these

“ happy

(1) That διδασκαλίαις δαιμονίων, signify doctrines of which demons are the object, will appear by comparing similar expressions in Scripture, particularly Heb. vi. 2. βαπτισμαν, διδαχης, &c. signify doctrines concerning baptism ; the laying on of hands ; the resurrection of the dead, and the life eternal.

(2) Παν το δαιμονιον μεταξυ εστι θεος τε και θυντα. Plato in *Symposio*.

(3) In his *Symposium*.

“happy men of the first and golden age of
“the world were departed this life, great Ju-
“piter promoted them to be demons, that is,
“keepers and protectors of earthly mortals,
“overseers of their good and evil works, and
“givers of riches.” This order of demons
found place in the religion of the ancient Ro-
mans, under the names of Penates, Lares, and
Manes Dii ; of them Cicero says, “Let them
“worship the gods, both those who were
“ever accounted celestial, and those whom
“their own merit has advanced to heaven.”
Again, “Let the rights of separate souls be in-
“violable, and let them account the deceased
“worthies as gods.” Besides these, their theo-
logists introduced another kind of demons, more
high and sublime, who had never been linked
to a mortal body, but were from the beginning
always the same². The heathens further main-
tained concerning their demons, that they ought
to be worshipped, by making images, building
temples, rearing altars for them, and burning
incense before them. Who is it therefore that
examines without prejudice the doctrines of the
church of Rome concerning saints and angels,

(1) Cicero de Legibus, lib. ii.

(2) Apuleius de dic. Socratis. Plutarch de Defectione
Oratorum.—Mede's Works, p. 631.

who is not convinced that they have revived the ancient doctrines concerning demons, as to their nature, office, origin, and the manner of worshipping them ; and that of them the Spirit speaketh expressly, when he says, “ some shall “ depart from the faith, teaching doctrines con-“ cerning demons.”

Another doctrine of the apostasy foretold is, the prohibition of marriage. The application of this to the church of Rome requires no proof.

No

(1) See on this last head, Middleton’s letter from Rome, in which he proves, from the testimony of the Classics, compared with what passed under his own eye, that the mode of worship now established in Rome, differs not in the most trivial circumstance from that practised by the ancient Romans, except in the name ; that it is mere Paganism, with a Christian aspect.

The most absurd part of the doctrines concerning demons, the worship of images, is not only practised over all the dominions of the Church of Rome, but it is also defended by the arguments which the Pagan Theologists suggested ; namely, that men worship, not the dead image, but the Being represented by it. So Arnobius (*Adverfus Gentiles*, lib. vi.) introduces the Gentiles defending their image-worship in this manner. “ Neque nos æra, neque “ auri argenteque materias, neque alias quibus signa “ confiunt, eas esse per se Deos, et religiosa decernimus “ nomina. Sed eos in his colimus, eosque veneramur, “ quos dedicatio infert sacra, et fabrilibus efficit habi-“ tare simulacris.”

No doubt some of the early heretics decried marriage, in which they shewed the spirit of the Antichrist foretold, but it remained for the Roman oracle to establish by his authority, and to represent as a Christian institution, the celibacy of the clergy, and such as devote themselves to a religious life.

As to abstinence from particular kinds of meat, another doctrine of the apostasy foretold, let the devotees of Rome speak their sentiments plainly, and they will acknowledge how much of real religion (in their opinion) consists in abstaining from flesh on Fridays, during Lent, and other fasts appointed by their Church. Or if they should not speak their sentiments so plainly, all those acquainted with the commerce of Europe, can testify how much it is affected by the superstitious reverence paid to this apostatical precept, over all the dominions of the church of Rome, in procuring a ready sale for the vast quantities of fish taken on the coasts of Europe, and even of America, to supply the want of flesh, from which the votaries of Rome piously abstain. In order to fulfil every circumstance, mentioned in the prophecy, these several doctrines have been introduced into the world, recommended to the veneration of mankind, and finally established as laws binding on the conscience, by pretended

pretended miracles, and fabulous legends¹, the arts of those who teach lies in hypocrisy.

In

(1) As an instance of fabulous legends being used to recommend image-worship, one of the apostatical doctrines, take the account of Bale, (Script. Illust. Britan. as quoted by Mede, b. iii. ch. 6.) He relates, that about the year 712, one Egivin of Worcester published in writing certain revelations, yea express visions he had seen, wherein he was enjoined to set up in his diocese of Worcester the image of the Blessed Virgin, for the people to worship; which Pope Constantine I. having made him confirm by an oath, not only ratified by his bull, but caused Brithwald, the Archbishop to hold a council of the whole clergy at London, to commend them to the people.

In that idolatrous council, the 2d of Nice (Act 4.) one of their proofs, among many others of a similar nature, for worshipping of images, is a tale (quoted out of I know not what Sopporius) of a certain recluse, who using to worship an image of the Virgin Mary, holding Christ in her arms, had been a long time tempted by the Devil to fornication; for which the old man being much grieved, the devil visibly appeared to him, and told him in plain terms, but under an oath of secrecy, that he would never cease to vex him, until he left off worshipping the image of the Blessed Virgin.

The monk, notwithstanding the Devil had made him swear by the Most High he should tell nobody, yet acquaints one Abbot Theodore with the business, who not only allows of his perjury in revealing it, but gives him

this

In the 13th and 17th chapters of the *Apocalypse* the finishing touch is given to the description of Antichrist; whatever was obscure in the former passages is there cleared up. Every question that can occur to an inquisitive mind is fully answered, particularly respecting the seat of his government, the time of its erection, the temper and spirit of it, its form and manner.

The seat of government appears to be the city of Rome; for we are told, that the dragon “gave “him (the beast) his power, and his seat,” (or throne.) The dragon represents Satan ruling by means of the Pagan Roman Emperors; “giving his seat to the beast,” must therefore signify, that he would bestow on Antichrist the same throne on which they governed, that is, the city of Rome. Again, the seven heads with which the beast is represented, signify seven mountains, on which the woman fitteth, chap. xvii. 9; a mark well known to be descriptive of Rome. But to put the matter beyond all controversy,

this ghostly resolution: “Συμφέρει δέ σοι μη καταλιπέιν ευτά-
“υπόλοιπα ταύτην πορνεῖον εἰς ὃν μὴ εἰσολθης. η εὐσεβεία προσκυνεῖν
“τον Κυριον ἡμῶν καὶ Θεον Ἰησον Χριστον μετα της εἰδιας αυτών μητρώος,
“εἰ εἰκόνα. It were better he frequented all the stews in
“the city, than not to worship Christ and his Mother
“in an image.” I am afraid some of this monk’s successors still observe this wholesome counsel. *Ibid.*

troverfy, he adds, ver. 18. “ The woman thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth ; ” a character applicable to Rome only, termed in the days of the Apostle John, the Mistress of the World.

The time of its erection is pointed out, by directing our attention to the successive forms of government exercised in the city of Rome, of which the Antichristian dominion is declared to be the eighth. So the angel, interpreting the seven heads, says, Rev. xvii. 10. “ There are seven kings : five are fallen, one is, and the other is not yet come ; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.” Kings, in the language of prophecy, signify kingdoms, or a succession of persons in authority¹. Here they denote so many forms of government, successively exercised in the city of Rome. Of these, says the angel, “ five are fallen, and one is ; ” that is, five are already passed previous to the vision, and the present form of government, the imperial, is the sixth. This representation perfectly accords with that of Tacitus the Roman historian². “ Rome,”

says

(1) See Dan. vii. 17.—23. Dan. viii. 20, 21, 22.

(2) Tacit. Am. lib. i. c. 1.

says he, “ was first governed by kings, then by “ consuls, by dictators, by decimviri, by mili-“ tary tribunes, with consular powers.” The next distinct form of government was the imperial, settled by Augustus, and exercised by Domitian at the time of the vision ; so that the angel says with all propriety, “ One is.” He then directs us to look forward, till the imperial form of government should pass away, and another not existing at the time of the vision should be set up, which would continue but a short space, and representing this as giving place to the Antichristian dominion, making the eighth form of Roman government.

Now, it is well known that the imperial form of government continued in Rome, till Odoacer king of the Heruli obliged Augustulus to abdicate the empire. Odoacer in a little time was overcome, and slain by Theodoric king of the Ostrogoths. The Ostrogoths were stripped of their conquests by the generals of Justinian, emperor of the east. Justinian constituted Rome and its territory a small dutchy, subject to his deputy, under the title of Exarch, residing at Ravenna. This was the only new form of government since the fall of the imperial ; for the Goths and Ostrogoths governed Rome, by the title of Kings of Italy, which was only one of the ancient forms revived. Rome remained sub-
ject

ject to the Exarch of Ravenna, till by a grant of Pepin king of France the Exarchate was given to the Bishop of Rome, which his successors retain to this day. Upon his being raised to the rank of temporal prince, Rome became again the seat of government, and of a government perfectly distinct from all the different forms exercised in it before, so that, according to the interpretation of the angel, he is the eighth that goeth into perdition. There is an admirable propriety in the angel's expression, if attentively considered. "He is the eight, he is of the "seven;" that is, the Antichristian dominion that shall be erected in Rome, may in some respects be termed the eighth form of government, though in other respects the seventh. The reasons will appear obvious, if the history of Rome is attentively considered. From the extinction of the imperial to the erection of papal dominion, Rome was not the seat of government: Neither Odoacer, Theodoric, or his successors, nor the Exarchs of Ravenna, resided in Rome, or took a title from Rome. Their government there could not be represented with propriety as exercised by Rome, that is, as a distinct head of Roman government; for this reason, those were but seven heads, and the Antichristian dominion may be reckoned the seventh. But in regard a considerable period of time elapsed betwixt

twixt the imperial and papal dominion, and that Rome appears during that period in a state perfectly distinct from what it was before or after, it was necessary to mention this in the explication of the emblem ; and on this account, the Antichristian dominion is termed by the angel, the eighth.

Another expression of the angel is well worthy of attention, “ And the beast that *was*, and “ *is not*, even he is the eight.” The words are an illustration of what was said, chap. xiii. 3. “ And I saw one of his heads as it were wound-“ ed to death, and his deadly wound was heal-“ ed :” Whereas in the transition from one head to another, during the course of the first six, there was no hazard to the life of the beast ; yet he mentions, that in the translation from the sixth to the seventh or last head, the life of one beast should be extinguished for a season, but again revived ; that is, in the several changes from one form of government to another, during the first six, there was no danger to the existence of the empire, but that in passing from the sixth to the last form of government, the existence of the empire would be extinguished for a season ; that Rome would receive a blow, which, in human appearance, would prove mortal to its power and dominion ; yet that a new form of government would be set up, which, to

the

the astonishment of the world, would revive its grandeur and empire, and that this form of Roman government was the Antichrist meant. This is a decisive circumstance. The empire was extinguished by the sword of Odoacer, and remained extinct under the Ostrogoths and emperors of the east. During all that period, Rome was not the metropolis of a great empire, but the inconsiderable town of a petty dutchy. She was no more the conquering city, that gave laws to an obedient world, but the defenceless prey of every bold invader. Comparing her situation at that period with the past, was there not reason to say, Imperial Rome, where is she? She, once the terror of her enemies, and the glory of her allies, “was, but is not.” Considering the course of human events, was there not reason to infer, that her glory was for ever extinguished? that her fate would be similar to that of the ancient seats of empire? that she should become in a little time a deserted Ninevah, or ruinous Babylon? But it was not so. Behold the Bishop of Rome invested with the rights of a temporal sovereign! animated by a bold ambition, making hasty strides to universal empire! see those daring attempts crowned with amazing success! so that in process of time, Papal Rome, by the thunder of her excommunications, became more formidable to a superstitious

tious world, than ever Imperial Rome was, by the valour of her legions, to the affrighted nations. The thinking part of mankind beheld with astonishment the growing greatness of the ambitious Pontiff, which they dared not to check; while the superstitious and the ignorant submitted to a more than servile subjection, an idolatrous adoration of the ghostly Ruler of Rome. Such are the well known facts which history relates, and sure the emblems of the vision represent them with accuracy and propriety; for the world is said “to wonder, and they “that dwell on the earth to worship the beast, “whose deadly wound was healed.”

The ten horns afford another mark of the time in which the empire of Antichrist should be set up in the world. This mark was given in the prophecy of Daniel mentioned above; here there is an explication of it by the angel interpreter, chap. xvii. 12. “And the ten horns which “thou sawest, are ten kings, which have re-“ceived no kingdom as yet; but receive power “as kings one hour with the beast.” He intimates that the Roman empire should not be followed by another universal monarchy, according to the uniform course of human events before, but that it should be divided into several separate independent kingdoms; directing our attention to that remarkable circumstance, as a mark

mark of the time in which Antichrist should reign ; because such a division of the empire must take place before his appearance, and the kingdoms then erected must remain coeval with the reign of Antichrist, during its continuance. Accordingly the northern nations dissolved the unity of the Roman empire, set up the several kingdoms of Europe¹, which had no existence at the period

(1) Learned men have discovered just ten kingdoms erected by the northern nations, after the fall of the imperial form of government : For my part, I think it not necessary to be so exact. The frequent application of ten, in scripture, to an indefinite number, justifies sufficiently our taking it in that sense here. Thus, ten times (Gen. xxxi. 7. 41.), signify many times ; ten women (Levit. xxvi. 26.), are many women ; ten sons. 1 Sam. i. 8. are many sons ; ten men, Eccl. vii. 9. signify many men. Besides, the prophecy represents such changes in horns, that if they were intended to point out the exact number of kingdoms, it would be necessary to represent the beast, sometimes with more, sometimes with fewer ; whereas he is every where represented with ten. Thus, Dan. vii. the beast is first represented with ten horns ; then we are told that another horn came up after them, so they made eleven ; but this last horn plucked up three of the first by the roots, so there remained but eight ; yet the same beast is represented throughout the Apocalypse, with ten horns. The truth is, that the kingdoms erected by the northern nations, were variable as to their numbers ; but as they were many when set up at first, they continue to be many separate kingdoms still ; which fully vindicates the prophetic representation.

period of the vision; and these kingdoms remain coeval with the Papal dominion in Rome for a thousand years past.

The spirit of the Antichristian government is represented chiefly by three characters, arrogance, idolatry, and persecution. Arrogance is held forth in these expressions, Rev. xiii. 5. "And " there was given to him a mouth, speaking " great things." This character was largely de- " scribed by the former prophets. The same ex- pressions are used Dan. vii. 8. and explained verse 25. " He shall speak great words against " the Most High,—and think to change times " and laws;" and chap. xi. 36. " He shall ex- alt himself, and magnify himself above every " god, and speak marvellous things against the " God of gods." Of him the Prophet Isaiah says, chap. xiv. 13. and 14. " Thou hast said in " thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will " exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will " sit also in the midst of the congregation, in " the sides of the north: I will ascend above " the height of the clouds, I will be like the " Most High."

The Apostle Paul, treating of the same character says, " He opposeth and exalteth him- " self above all that is called God, or is wor- " shipped; so that he, as god, fitteth in the

“ temple of God, shewing himself that he is
“ god.”

The idolatry of this power is pointed out under the terms of blasphemy¹, Rev. xiii. 6. and fornication, chap. xvii. 1---5. And his persecuting the true worshippers of God is mentioned in plain terms, chap. xiii. 7. “ It was given to
“ him to make war with the saints, and to over-
“ come them,” a circumstance which exactly agrees with the representation of the prophet Daniel, (chap. vii. 21. and 25.) “ I beheld, and
“ the same horn made war with the saints, and
“ prevailed against them ;—he shall wear out
“ the saints of the Most High.” And the woman carried by the beast, is said to be “ drunk-
“ en with the blood of the saints, and with the
“ blood of the martyrs of Jesus,” chap. xvii. 6.

The avowed claims of the Roman pontiff, the uniform practice of the Church of Rome, guided by his authority, and the public records of Europe, abundantly shew how applicable these characters are to the papacy.

Indeed the facts on which the proof is built, are acknowledged by the most zealous defenders of the see of Rome, though the criminality of these facts is denied. By a delusion common to all irreclaimable sinners, they call the vices to which they are addicted, by the name of those

virtues

(1) Compare with Isa. lxv. 7. and Ezek. xx. 27, 28.

virtues which they resemble. Arrogance is with them, lawful authority. Idolatry is dovation ; and persecution is zeal in propagating the faith, and purging the world of heretics. The tyrant Nero would not acknowledge that he exceeded lawful authority. The Heathens defended their idolatry by the same sophistical arguments which the Church of Rome offers at this day. And the apostate Jewish Church fancied they did God good service, when they put to death Christ and his Apostles. We might expect that the Church of Rome, animated by the same spirit, would be under the influence of the same delusion. But what is more to our purpose, the Prophecies expressly mention this delusion. It is of them the apostle says, (2 Thess. ii. 10, 11, 12.)

“ Because they received not the love of the
“ truth, that they might be saved: For this
“ cause, God shall send them *strong delusions*,
“ that they should believe a lie: That they
“ might be all damned who believe not the
“ truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

When the prophecies are more abundantly fulfilled by the lapse of time, and spiritual Babylon is more clearly revealed, by the plagues which God will inflict in his providence, still this delusion continues. When “ the fifth angel poured
“ out his vial on the seat of the beast, and his
“ kingdom was full of darkness, they gnawed
“ their

“ their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.”
Rev. xvi. 10, 11.

The form of the Antichristian government is described in this prophecy. The form of any government, distinct from the spirit of it, is neither good or evil ; it is not therefore so liable to misrepresentation by the bias of our prejudices and passions. It is a matter of historical investigation rather than of moral disquisition. The Antichristian government appears from the prophecy to be very complex ; yet the several constituent parts, and their relations to each other, are minutely delineated, so that there is little probability the representation will suit any other government but that which the spirit of prophecy had in view. The constituent parts of Anti-christ’s government are these : The first beast, described chap. xiii. 1.—10. chap. xvii. 7. The horns of the first beast, chap. xiii. 2. and chap. xvii. 12.—18. The second beast, xiii. 11.—17. The image of the first beast, chap. xiii. 14, 15. The woman carried by the beast, chap. xvii. 1.—6. and 18.

In the two first verses of the 13th chapter, we have a general representation of the Roman empire, under the emblem of a beast with seven heads ; that is, as subsisting under seven different

rent forms of government, which include the whole period of its existence, from the foundation of the city to its final destruction. From the 3d verse, though the term beast is retained, there is a transition in the idea conveyed by it from the *collective body* of the empire to the *seventh head* of that empire, which makes the first a beast as distinct from the second, and constitutes the principal part of the Antichristian government. By an usual figure of speech, the whole is put for a part. As this is an observation of the last importance, in forming distinct ideas of the several symbols used in this chapter, it will be necessary to establish the truth of it.

And in order to this, consider the interpretation of the angel, Rev. xvii. 7--13. expressly designed to shew “the mystery of the beast.” In that passage, the term Beast is used five several times, yet four times of these five the angel must be understood to describe by the term, not the collective body of the empire, but the seventh or last head. Thus, ver. 11. “The beast that was and “is not, even he is the eighth, he is of the seven.” This cannot in any sense apply to the collective body of the empire, but obviously refers to the head, ver. 12. “and the ten horns—receive “power as kings one hour with the beast.” This cannot mean that they should receive power at the same time with the collective body of

of the empire, for they make a part of it, and it were a solecism to say, that they would receive power when they would receive power. The intention is to shew, that they would be contemporary with the seventh head here designed by the general term Beast, ver. 13. "These shall give their power and strength unto the beast." Not surely to the collective body of the empire, for that would be giving their power to themselves, but to the seventh head of the beast then reigning; ver. 17. "For God hath put in their hearts to give their kingdom unto the beast," that is, to the seventh head.

That the term Beast here signifies the head of the Antichristian empire distinct from the body, is confirmed, by comparing this with the parallel passage, Dan. vii. 20, 21, 24, 25. ; for all the characters here given of the beast are applied there to the little horn. Now, the fourth beast in Daniel's vision corresponds with the collective body of the empire, and the little horn is the same power represented to the apostle by the seventh head. Besides, the characters here given fully apply to the head, but not at all to the collective body of the empire. Thus, Rev. xiii. 3. "all the world wondered after the beast", represents the stupid admiration of the world for the papacy, or the astonishment of mankind to see the power of Rome revived in this new form

of government. In whatever way you take it, it is applicable to the head, not to the collective body of the empire ; ver. 4. " And they " worshipped the beast," cannot in any tolerable sense apply to the whole body of the empire ; but the application of it to the head is obvious ; for it is perfectly consistent with truth, that the veneration for the Roman see rose to an idolatrous adoration of its possessor ; ver. 5. " And " there was given unto him a mouth speaking " great things, and blasphemies." This aptly represents the unbounded supremacy claimed by the head, and the idolatrous doctrines and practices recommended by him. True it is, that the blasphemies uttered by this monster were swallowed by the empire ; but the character given here is, not the receiving but the uttering of them, ver. 7. " And it was given to " him to make war with the saints, and to over- " come them." On this character chiefly, Mede finds his idea, that the collective body of the secular empire is here intended ; because the persons deemed heretics were put to death, in all parts, and by all the princes of the empire.

They were so, but still it was by the instigation of the see of Rome, who employed for this purpose decrees, and enforced those decrees by interdicts and excommunications ; nay, even sometimes

sometimes deprived the secular princes of their territories, for neglecting to purge their dominions of the pretended heretics. As in a living creature the act of the members is ascribed to the head, by whose will they move ; and particularly, an animal having horns, pushes with his horns, by the direction of the head which carries them : So here the persecution carried on in all parts, and by all the princes of the empire, is ascribed to the head, by whose nod they are moved. “ And power was given him over “ all kindreds, tongues, nations, and lan- “ guages.” It is not true, that the collective body of the empire has power over all nations, or a part of all nations ; but it is literally true, that the see of Rome has dispatched emissaries to all the corners of the known world, whose chief business is to inculcate the doctrine of the Pope’s supremacy, and in all countries they have made some proselytes, so that a part of all kindredstongues, nations, and languages, have submitted themselves to this seventh head of the Roman empire.

Having thus ascertained, that by the first beast, the spirit of prophecy understands the seventh or last head of the Roman empire ; let us see how the characters given, so far as they respect the form of government, accord to the papacy. The characters are these : That he should exer-

cise

cise a form of government, distinct from all those exercised in that city before : That he should be contemporary with several separate independent kingdoms, erected out of the dissolution of the empire : That the territory of this prince should be small, compared with the other divisions of the empire ; for he is called the Little Horn, and consequently very small, compared with the ancient empire in its undivided state ; yet that his power should be absolute over the contemporary kings, within the compass of the empire, and should in some measure extend over all nations.

Were we to form conjectures concerning this prophecy, before it was accomplished, we would be disposed to think, that some of the characters here given are inconsistent with others. Does it not appear contrary to our ideas of human nature, as it has been unheard of in the annals of the world, that a petty prince should absolutely command several other princes, each of whom had larger dominions and more forces than him ; yet by the event every character is verified. It is obvious that a prince now resides in the city of Rome, whose predecessors in office have resided in it as the seat of their government above a thousand years : That the form of his government is different from every form exercised in that city before : That

he arose to the height of his power upon the ruins of the divided empire, and has existed all along contemporary with the kingdoms erected out of its dissolution : That his territory is small, compared with the dominions of the contemporary princes. Yet it is beyond all controversy, that this petty prince has claimed and exercised the most unlimited authority over the contemporary princes of the empire, by taxing their subjects, insulting their persons, and depriving them at times of their dominions ; while his emissaries, numerous as gnats in the summer-sun, have spread themselves over all nations, and every where made some proselytes to the doctrine of his supremacy. The ten horns make another part of Antichrist's government ; they are represented in the vision, as growing on the seventh head, consequently moveable by his nod ; they are at the same time represented with crowns, to intimate that they are independent kingdoms. The mystery and apparent inconsistency of this representation is cleared up by the angel interpreter, chap. xvii. 12, 13. 17.

“ The ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings,
“ which have received no kingdom as yet, but
“ receive power as kings one hour (at the same
“ time) with the beast. These have one mind,
“ (the same mind) and shall give their strength
“ and power unto the beast ;—for God hath put
“ in

“ in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree
“ and give their kingdom to the beast, until the
“ words of God be fulfilled.” He shews that
these kingdoms should not be subject to the ci-
vil dominion of the seventh head, either as natu-
ral subjects, or as conquered kingdoms, but
should be independent of him, and of each other;
yet that they would, by a voluntary submission,
contribute their power to support his authority ;
particularly in persecuting the faithful followers
of Christ. “ These shall make war with the
“ Lamb.” The event has fully justified the
vision and the interpretation. The kingdoms of
Europe constitute no part of the territory subject
to the Bishop of Rome ; many of the sovereigns
of Europe, even in a dark and superstitious age
refused to hold their kingdoms as fiefs of the
Roman see ; but they voluntarily submitted to
his spiritual jurisdiction, and became his ready
agents in extirpating pretended heretics out of
their dominions. They gave their power to
support his sentences ; they gave the authority
of their laws, and the force of their arms. The
persons denounced heretic by him, they put to
death, by private assassinations and by public
executions ; nay, they levied armies at his insti-
gation, and sacrificed thousands of their inoffen-
five subjects as victims of papal cruelty. In the
year 1209, the Count of Thoulouse was repre-
sented

sented as harbouring the Albigenses in his dominions : An army of cross-bearers was raised against him, by means of Innocent III. It consisted of four hundred thousand persons, among whom were five or six bishops. They took the town of Beziers, and put all to the sword, to the number of sixty thousand, pursuing the war with like cruelty and fury in many other places ; and Mountfort, the general of this holy war, was rewarded with the greatest part of the Count of Thoulouse's dominions. The latter being deposed as a favourer of heretics, the former was, for his good services, declared lord of all the countries he had conquered¹.

Much about this time, the inquisition was set on foot ; a tribunal which arrests upon suspicion, convicts by torture, and punishes with unparalleled severity. Among the laws of that tribunal, collected into one body by order of Charles V. in the year 1550, are the following : “ It shall not be lawful for any, except the divines admitted by the University, to discourse or enter into controversy concerning the sense of Scripture. Whosoever shall presume to do so, from the day of his crime, he shall be deemed intestate, and have no right to dispose of his own effects. In punishment there shall be degrees. When the guilty are brought to repentance, “ if

(1) Mezeray's Hist. de Fran. Ann. 1209.

“ if men, they shall be put to death with the
“ sword ; if women, they shall be buried alive.
“ When they remain contumacious, they shall
“ be burnt, and their effects confiscated¹.”

The reader will readily call to mind the massacre of Paris, on the 24th August 1572, when ten thousand Hugonots were slaughtered in one night, in cold blood, without a shadow of reason but their being Protestants. The number of Protestants put to death in Spain and the Low Countries, by Philip II. at the instigation of the see of Rome, surpasses, at a moderate computation, two hundred thousand. The Waldenses, in every age, afforded employment for the persecuting spirit of the papal see ; but in the years 1655, 1686, and 1696, the prosecution was carried on with peculiar marks of enormity².

Switzerland, after the Reformation, became a theatre of papal tyranny. Cardinal Ghisleri, afterwards known by the name of Pius V. on account of the services he had rendered the Roman church, by the destruction of heretics, was appointed Commissary-general of the inquisition. Clothed with that terrific character, he went to Switzerland, where he discharged the office with a zeal for the Catholic faith, suitable to the expectations that had been formed of him. Two

hundred

(1) *Apud Burgundium, in Hist. Belg. lib. ii.*

(2) *Giles Hist. des Egl. Vaudorfis, ch. 49. p. 353.*

hundred and fifty-seven were burnt at one stake at St. Gall. Such as had opportunity of withdrawing from the persecution fled to the mountains, to conceal themselves in dens and caves of the earth; but even those places that afforded shelter to the wild beasts, could not secure the unhappy sufferers from the diligence of the zealous Ghisleri; for he pursued them to their retreats, and sacrificed thousands as victims of papal cruelty. He carried on this persecution in the middle of winter; so that numbers who might have escaped his diligence perished through the inclemency of the season: Many were found frozen to death in the snow, and among these a mother and her child; the child still hanging at her breast. All these circumstances are related by the writer of his life, as actions which justly merited the rank of a saint; and accordingly he was canonized by Clement XI. A. D. 1712. In England, during the reign of Queen Mary, much of the best blood in the nation was shed, to support the Roman faith, and that too with peculiar marks of enormity. In Guernsey, a woman great with child was tied up to the stake, and the flames kindled round her. When the fire began to operate, her pains came upon her, and she was delivered of a living child. A humane spectator snatched the infant out of the flames; but the magistrates, who

who were present, conferred together ; the result of their deliberation was, to decree that the child was born a heretic, and therefore ought not to live. Accordingly, with these devout sentiments which their religion inspired, similar to those of the worshippers of Moloch, the helpless innocent infant was thrown back into the flames, where his mother was in anguish expiring.

In Ireland, during the reign of Charles I. *A. D. 1640*, the Catholics of that kingdom arose, unprovoked, in the night, and cut the throats of forty thousand Protestants. “ Those who escaped (says Hume), hurried along through the hostile territories, and found every heart not immured in unrelenting barbarity, guarded by the more implacable furies of mistaken piety and religion.” As these facts cannot be denied, Catholics endeavour to screen their faith from the odium which they naturally occasion, by saying, “ that these persecutions were carried on by the civil power ;” and that is granting what the prophecy foretold. The monstrous wild beast, representing Antichrist, pushes at the Lamb and his followers with his horns ; and these horns are the several Sovereigns of Europe, or, in other words, the civil power.

A third member of the Antichristian government is the second beast, (verse 11...14.), by which

which the spirit of prophecy represents the Roman clergy, which will appear from a careful perusal of the passage. The prophet “ beheld “ this beast coming up out of the earth.” The earth here is contrasted to the sea, from which the first beast arose. The sea represents society in a fluctuating condition, Rev. xvii. 15. The earth represents society in a more settled state. And certain it is, that while all other empires have had their origin from the commotions excited in society, the Roman clergy gained their ascendency in times of peace, superstition spread its baneful influence over the human mind most powerfully, when the attention was not called away by the embarrassments of war, or the commotions usual in the world. Prosperity in every period increased the corruptions of the Church in general, and of the clergy in particular. He beheld this beast *coming up* out of the earth ; that is, making a gradual progress towards empire. The dominion of the clergy was by no means coeval with their appearance as Herald's of the Truth. They did not at first affect the authority exercised by the princes and great men of the world, but wished to be great, by becoming the ministers of others, and affected to be chief, by becoming servants to all. By degrees, as real religion declined, and superstition grew, the opulence and immunities of the clergy

gy were greatly increased. These suggested to the ambitious the idea of a dominion, distinct from and independent of the civil power, which the Roman clergy have maintained ever since, with invincible obstinacy. “ He had two horns like a lamb.” Horns are the symbols of power, and the lamb is every where in this book an emblem of Christ. Now, the only power which Christ communicated to his followers, was of a spiritual nature, and given to the apostles and their successors in the office of their ministry. Horns like a lamb therefore represent, in the most explicit manner that emblematical language is capable of, the teachers of Christianity, the ministers of the gospel; and this interpretation is confirmed by the appellation of false prophet, afterwards given to this second beast, Rev. xix. 20. These horns are two, and the Roman clergy are divided into two classes, the secular and the regular. However, they are teachers of Christianity only in name, not in reality; for though the beast had horns like a lamb, “ he spake as a dragon.”

The dragon signifies “ the old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world,” Rev. xii. 9. So that, to speak as a dragon, is to utter doctrines suggested by seducing spirits, to teach lies in hypocrisy, a character which the teachers of the Roman faith

oblige us to apply to them, by reviving the doctrines concerning demons, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats which God has created to be received with thanksgiving. The spirit of intolerance and persecution which hath distinguished them in every age, and hath shed the blood of so many thousands whom they called heretics, renders the description still more striking ; and lays them directly open to the charge which our Lord brings home to the Jews, John viii. 44. “ Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do : He was a murderer from the beginning.”

“ And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him.” Nothing can be more evident than the similarity betwixt the spirit of the Roman clergy and that of the papacy ; they alike discover the same zeal for idolatry, the same rage for persecution, the same opposition to civil government, the same claim to a dominion over the conscience. Nor is the similarity of their spirit more evident than the zeal of the clergy to make the world bow beneath the yoke of the pontiff. They every where inculcated the doctrine of his supremacy, and in all his contests with the civil power, maintained his cause. Thus “ causing the earth, and them that dwell therein, to worship the first beast.” The means by which the second beast

beast induces the earth to worship the first beast, is not force, but delusion : “ And he doth great wonders ; so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on earth, in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast.” By all this we learn that he wrought lying wonders, according to the character formerly given, 2 Theff. ii. 9. We are not to suppose that he wrought those miracles in reality ; for he is said “ to deceive them that dwell on the earth,” and to do those wonders “ in sight of men ; that is, to appearance, as tricks performed by sleight of hand, seem miracles to the by-standers. His making fire to come down from heaven, is an allusion to the conduct of Elijah, who, by bringing fire from heaven, proved himself to be the Prophet of the true God ; and so convinced the people that they bowed the head and worshipped, 1 Kings xviii. 38, 39. ; intimating, that the second beast or false prophet should, after the example of Elijah, offer miracles, to prove himself the Prophet of the true God ; and that by these miracles, though feigned, he should prevail, as Elijah did, so as to persuade the world to bow the head, and worship the first beast. The application is obvious. The Roman clergy not only profess to work miracles, but likewise offer these miracles as an invincible argument of

their

their being the ministers of the true church. It must be allowed, that in a superstitious age this argument had, of all others the greatest weight with the ignorant multitude ; and it is certain that the clergy made use of the influence acquired by it, to establish the Antichristian supremacy of the Bishop of Rome.

A fourth constituent part of the Antichristian government, is the image. It appears from the description to be formed for the first beast, that is, for the seventh head, or revived form of Roman government ; it is represented as formed by the people at large—at the instigation of the second beast ; for he said “ to “ them that dwell on the earth, that they “ should make an image to the beast, *which had* “ *the wound by a sword*, and did live.” It appears that this image, when first formed, was dead, as all images are, but was made alive by the second beast ; “ for he had power to give “ life unto the image of the beast :” That when alive, the image uttered his voice, in imperial mandates, commanding such as would not worship him, to be put to death, and excluding from the privileges of civil society, all such as would not in some shape or other testify their subjection : “ That the image of the beast should both “ speak, and cause that as many as would not “ worship the image of the beast, should be kil- “ led. And he causeth all, both small and great, “ rich

“ rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a
“ mark in their right hands and in their fore-
“ heads : And that no man might buy or sell,
“ save he that had the mark, or the name of the
“ beast, or the number of his name.” An
image may be considered either as a dead repre-
sentation of a living subject, or as an idol, and
so an object of divine worship. This image,
therefore, fitly represents the twofold claim of
the Roman Pontiff to a supremacy in temporals
and spirituals : By the first, he claims authority
over all the kings of the earth ; by the second,
he claims divine honors, and infallible authori-
ty, as the representative of the Deity.

The image is no new member of the Anti-
christian government, but the member first de-
scribed, now represented in a different light ; it
was formed for the first beast. Accordingly,
this claim, has been considered as invariably an-
nexed to the papacy, yet perfectly distinct from
the power and authority belonging to the Pope,
as a temporal prince. The Sovereigns of Eu-
rope, in their transactions with the Pope, have
constantly made a distinction betwixt the court
of Rome and the holy see, while they treated
the former with a considerable degree of aspe-
rity, if not contempt ; they professed the most
profound veneration for the latter, exactly ful-
filling the prophecy, which shews that Anti-
christ

christ would attain the greatest authority and power, not as a temporal prince, but as being the idol of the people, considering him as the representative of the Deity. This image was formed by them that dwell on the earth, at the instigation of the second beast. It was originally dead, but the second beast had power to give life unto it. The authority claimed by the Pope in temporals is a mere chimera. It differs as much from the real power of the princes of the world, as an image (which has neither voice to terrify nor teeth to tear) differs from a fierce living animal. The authority claimed in spirituals is an impious usurpation of the rights of the Deity. And it is certain that the twofold claim would have been rejected by the world with contempt, if the Roman clergy had not universally and steadily supported it, by all the influence which superstition gave them over the minds of the people. They converted it into a real authority. They enabled the Pontiff to use it effectually. In consequence of their support, he spake in the lordly strain of a Supreme King, to the princes and the people. He issued the thunders of the Vatican against those who disputed his authority. He put to death in a variety of forms, such as dared to oppose him. He excluded from the privileges of civil society,

society, all such as would not submit to his claims and authority¹.

The fifth constituent part of the Antichristian government is the Babylonish woman. She is represented as “arrayed in purple and scarlet, decked with gold, and precious stones and pearls,” that is, affecting the pomp, and decorated with the ornaments purchased by the wealth of this world,
“ holding

(1) See the decree of Alexander III. in the Synod of Tours; the bull of Martin V. against the errors of Wickliff and Huds, annexed to the acts of the Council of Constance: There it is decreed, “That men of this sort be not permitted to have houses, to rear families, to make contracts, to carry on traffic or business of any kind, or to enjoy the comforts of humanity, in common with the faithful.” These are almost the express words which the prophecy has put into the mouth of the image: See likewise the bull of Paul III. against Henry VIII. and the bull of Paul V. Regnans in Excelsis, fulminated in the 11th year of Queen Elizabeth. To quote instances in order to prove that the Roman clergy supported this extravagant claim, would be to copy a great part of the history of Europe for a thousand years past: However, one instance I cannot omit. An encyclical letter, dated London, 19th January 1791, signed by three Vicars Apostolic of England, expressly prohibits the Catholics of that kingdom to take an oath prescribed by Government, though that oath contains nothing inconsistent with Catholic principles, but a renunciation of the Pope’s supremacy in temporals. They express themselves thus: “The four Apostolical Vicars, in the above mentioned encyclical letter

“ holding the cup of her filthiness in her hand,” in imitation of noted harlots of old, offering love potions, to excite men to commit fornication with her, that is, using every inveigling art to propagate her idolatries, “ fitting on many “ waters,” Rev. xvii. 1. successful in extending her commerce “ to peoples, multitudes, nations, “ and

“ letter (dated October 21, 1789), declared, That none “ of the faithful clergy or laity ought to take any new “ oath, or sign any new declaration in doctrinal matters, “ or subscribe any new instrument wherein the interests “ of religion are concerned, without the previous appro-“ bation of their respective Bishop ; and they required “ submission to those determinations. The altered oath “ has not been approved by us ; and therefore cannot “ be lawfully or conscientiously taken by any of the “ faithful of our districts.” Here the lamb-like beast speaks as a dragon ; to cause the earth, and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast.

Candour obliges me to say, that the most respectable Catholics in England, met together in a committee, protested against the encyclical letter mentioned, in these terms: “ We the Catholic Committee, whose names are “ under written, do hereby, before God, solemnly protest “ and call upon God to witness our protest against your “ Lordships encyclical letters, of the 21st day of October “ 1789, and of the 19th day of January last, as imprudent, “ arbitrary, unjust ; as encroaching on our natural, civil, “ and religious rights ; inculcating principles hostile to “ society and government, and the constitution and laws “ of

“ and tongues, ver. 15. so that the kings of the
“ earth have committed fornication with her,
“ and the nations have drunk of the wine of
“ the wrath of her fornication,” that is, having
been filled with a delirious rage for her idola-
tries, while she “ is drunk with the blood of the
“ saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of
“ Jefus.”

S

We

“ of the British empire ; as derogatory from the allegi-
“ ance we owe to the State and the settlement of the
“ Crown, and as tending to continue, increase and con-
“ firm the prejudices against the faith and moral character
“ of the Catholics, &c.

(Signed) “ *Charles Berington.*

“ *Jos. Wilks,*

“ *Stourton,*

“ *Petre,*

“ *Henry Chas. Englefield*

“ *John Lawson,*

“ *John Throckmorton,*

“ *William Fermor,*

“ *John Townly,*

“ *Thomas Hornyhold.*”

It is a pity that they who have seen so far into the wickedness of the Pope's claim, and the unjustifiable attempts of the clergy to establish it, did not look a little farther into the light of Scripture prophecy, so as to recognise Antichrist, and his deputy the false prophet, and thus break their chains at once.

We are not left to vague conjecture for the explication of all this ; for we are told that the woman is “ that great city which reigned (at “ the period of the vision) over the kings of the “ earth,” a mark applicable to Rome only, by the testimony of Papists, as well as Protestants. Rome is represented under the figure of a woman, in as far as she is a church professedly Christian ; for a woman is introduced, ch. xii. 1. who, without all controversy, is a type of the true church of Christ, the allusion in both places is to a well known scripture metaphor, by which the church is called the Spouse of Christ. But how different is the woman represented there from the person introduced here. There “ she was cloathed with the sun, and the moon “ under her feet, and upon her head a crown of “ twelve stars,” that is, clothed with the merits of her lawful husband, and faithful to the vows she had taken to him who is the Sun of Righteousness, holding sublunary things with contempt under her feet, dispersing the midnight darkness which overspread the nations, by the benign light which her teachers communicated, who were “ the “ servants of Christ and her glory.” Here we behold a vile prostitute, unfaithful to her husband, affecting the pomp, thirsting after the wealth of this world ; intoxicating instead of enlightening the nations, so as to excite a vehement attachment

tachment to her idolatries, and giving vent to the malignity of her heart, by persecuting the lawful children of her alleged husband. How far the description of this last is applicable to the church of Rome, we have already seen. But my intention at present is, to consider what part this woman acts in the Antichristian government.

She is represented as riding triumphantly on the first beast. She holds her cup as an object

(1) This view must refute the explication given by late Catholic writers, of the woman and the beast. They acknowledge that the woman is Rome, and that the beast is Antichrist ; but say that the woman is Pagan Rome, and that Antichrist has not yet appeared. (See Pastormie's explication of the Apocalypse, on the passage). The emblematical representations of the Apocalypse may be fitly called a history-painting. Now, put the case, that you see a piece of history-painting, in which a person on horse-back makes a conspicuous figure ; you ask an explication of the painter ; he tells you, that by the horse he understands Bucephalus, and by the rider, Frederick III. King of Prussia : You would readily note him down as an enormous blunderer, and conclude he intended to represent something fictitious, not real history ; because it were monstrously absurd to mount Frederick on a horse that had died ages before he existed. Or, suppose the painter tells you that the horse is now alive, belonging to George III. King of Britain, and that the rider is Pyrrhus,

King

object of admiration to the world, that the honour and attachment bestowed on her may be reflected on him, as her supporter. This artifice proves successful, for her occupation, her ornaments, the philters or love-potions administered by her, all concur to procure a numerous crowd of admirers among princes and people, while those admirers cannot possibly separate her interest from that of her supporter; in venerating her, they must necessarily bow to his authority. In exact conformity to this representation, the Bishop of Rome has had the artifice to persuade the world that he is the visible head of the church, the supreme judge of all controversies, and consequently that a submission to his authority is necessary, not only for the glory, but even for the existence of the church, as a collective body. And certain it is, that many who discern the illegal usurpations of the Pope in temporals, submit to his authority in spirituals, from a belief that it is necessary

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King of Epire, still the absurdity were the same, to represent on a horse now existing, a man who had died ages before. But this absurdity is very modestly laid to the charge of the Spirit of prophecy, by these Catholic writers. Behold, according to them, Pagan Rome, which ceased to exist 1500 years ago, riding on Antichrist, who has not yet appeared in the world.

ry for the glory of the church. Behold, then, Antichrist revealed, and the sources of his enormous power unfolded.

He is represented as a temporal prince sitting in Rome, on the throne of the ancient Cæsars, but possessing a small territory, for the unity of the empire is dissolved, and the territory divided into several separate independent kingdoms, yet claiming, and successfully establishing an unlimited supremacy, in matters temporal and spiritual, not only over the princes and people of the empire, but in some measure over all nations. While the success of his claim is owing partly to the voluntary but blind submission of the contemporary princes; partly to the influence of a great society, similar in spirit to himself, professing to be the teachers of Christianity, yet in reality false prophets, inculcating every where, and on all men, submission to his authority; partly to the artifice of this society, holding him up to the world as a visible representative of the Deity, and as such endowed with infallible authority, which, wheresoever it is established, puts it in his power, by sentences of death and confiscation, to terrify the refractory into submission; and partly to the artifice of representing his authority, as necessarily connected with the existence of the true church of Christ; he is

is in reality the supporter of a vile prostitute, unfaithful to her alleged husband, using sorceries, and every inveigling art, to draw admirers, while her success establishes his claim, on account of their mutual connection. Such are the features of Antichrist in the prophecy. That each of them separately, and the whole assemblage, fit the Bishop of Rome, as exactly as if he sat for the picture, all Europe knows; and for my part, I cannot suppose that this striking resemblance betwixt the portrait and the man arises from chance, without a design in the spirit of prophecy to represent him, any more than I can believe that the beautiful fabric of the world owes its regularity to a fortuitous concourse of atoms.

Thus far we have seen the view which the prophecies give of the corruptions of professed Christians in our times, and the great punishment inflicted by the Sovereign Ruler on account of these corruptions. Let us now consider the view given of the real followers of Christ in the same period. It is laid before us in three several representations; that of the 144,000 sealed ones, (Rev. vii. 2.—8. chap. xiv. 1.—5.), the two witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, (chap. xi. 3.—6.), and the woman hid in the wilderness, (chap. xii. 6. and 14.).

S E C T I O N III.

Of the 144,000 sealed Ones.

THE time of the 144,000 sealed ones commenced much earlier than the period in which we live; but still they continue in our time, and beyond it, existing coeval with the beast and Babylon, as appears from the contrast in their characters: “These are they which were not defiled with women, for they are virgins:” that is, they are free from the spiritual fornication of Babylon, extensively prevailing in their time. The circumstances respecting them which are remarkable, are these: That they should make but a small part of all Israel, that is, of the professed people of God: That the great body of Israel should be corrupted; hence the necessity of their being sealed for preservation: That they should not be confined to any particular tribe or situation in the land, but should be taken from among all the tribes, and over all the extent of the land: That their profession, though sincere should be secret, making melody to God, while their voice was not heard by the world; “for no man could learn that song:” That they should be free from the idolatry of their contemporaries, and should be followers of the example of their Redeemer.

If we examine matters attentively, we shall find, that this is a true state of genuine Christianity, from a short period after the conversion of Constantine, to the present moment. Previous to that æra, a profession of Christianity exposed men to a variety of hardships in their persons and effects, so that the generality of those who embraced it were influenced by a conviction of its truth, the hypocrites among them were few. From the period that Christianity became the established religion of the empire, multitudes embraced it to acquire the favour of the Emperor. In process of time, a profession of it became a necessary test of admission into civil and military employments, so that the generality embraced it from motives purely secular, without any conviction of its truth, and the real Christians among them were of course proportionally few. During the dark ages of superstition and idolatry, when the kingdom of Antichrist was at the height, we can easily see, that the number of real Christians were very few. At the Reformation, when whole nations threw off the yoke of Antichrist, and embraced a purer outward form of Christianity than that which prevailed in the dark ages, we cannot suppose, that all who separated themselves from the communion of the church of Rome were animated by motives purely religious.

gious. If we examine the state of religion at the present moment, in those countries where the Reformation is established, we must infer, that the number of real Christians is comparatively few. All are admitted to the outward privileges of Christianity as a birthright, and the prejudices of their early education induce the generality to adhere to it afterwards, without ever enquiring into its truth; so that we may infer, without a breach of charity, that if the place of their birth had been different, they would with equal ease have embraced, and with equal zeal maintained Mahometanism or Paganism. To the thoughtless many, we may add not a few who are professed infidels, and join with the many who pretend a respect for revealed religion, while they avowedly indulge those criminal passions which are inconsistent with its pure precepts. To sum up the account, take in those who from secular motives lay a restraint on their outward conduct, while they are strangers, if not enemies to the spirit of Christianity at heart; and we must infer, that the number of real Christians, compared with the nominal, is indeed small. No doubt the proportion of real to nominal Christians must have varied at different periods, yet still they are represented by 144,000, which I consider as an indefinite number, being the square of 12, with

the addition of 1000; to intimate, that real Christians, though few in proportion, and varying as to their number, should be always built on the foundation of the holy apostles and prophets. The 144,000 are *sealed*, to preserve them from the apostasy of their time; that is, they are the “elect according to the foreknowledge of God “the Father;” so that though “a Hymeneus “and a Philetus may fall away, the founda-“tion of God standeth *sure*, having this *seal*. “The Lord knoweth them who are his.” Again, they are partakers of “the Spirit of God, “by which they are sealed unto the day of re-“demption.” Accordingly, every true Christian, in the present as well as in former ages, is of the elect, and individually a partaker of the Spirit of God. By his operation he receives that faith “which is the substance of things hoped “for, the evidence of things not seen.” Faith affords an evidence of the invisible world, and the objects of it, as distinct from any views attained by unassisted reason, as sight is from hear-say. Faith likewise gives a foretaste of the joys hoped for, by a view of the Christian’s interest in them; and these views effectually preserve him from the craftiness of “those who lie in “wait to deceive,” as well as from the allurements of sense, by which the multitudes of professed Christians are undone.

True Christians are not confined to one place, or to one party, but spread over all the visible Church, and mingled with all parties. They are not visible as a society distinct from nominal Christians, but “ their hearts being purified to “ an unfeigned obedience of the truth,” their devotions, whether performed in secret retirements, or in public assemblies, are acceptable to Him, whose privilege it is to “ search the hearts “ and to try the reins of the children of men.” They are known to the world only by abhorring its maxims, and avoiding its manners, while they consider their Redeemer’s precepts and example as the sign posts erected to mark their way to eternal glory.

S E C T I O N V.

Of the Witnesses.

A second view of Christ’s faithful followers in our time is given us in the account of the two witnesses (Rev. xi. 3. 14.) prophesying in sack-cloth. They are contemporary with the beast, who makes war against them, ver. 7. The time allotted to their prophecy is “ a thousand two “ hundred and threescore days,” ver. 3. which is precisely of the same duration with “ forty “ months,”

“ months,” allotted to the reign of the beast, chap. xii. 5. ; so that the beginning and end of their prophecy will correspond with the rise and fall of his empire. These witnesses differ as much from their contemporaries, the 144,000 sealed ones, as Elijah differed from the 7000 in Israel in his time, who “ did not bow the knee “ to Baal.” Those testify openly against the antichristianism of the Papacy, and the corruptions of the Church of Rome ; while these abstain from her corruptions, and worship God sincerely in secret. These witnesses are two, because that is the number required by the law, and approved by the Gospel, (Deut. xix. 15. Matt. xviii. 16.), “ In the mouth of two witnesses shall every word be established ;” and upon former occasions, two have often been joined in commission, as Moses and Aaron in Egypt, Elijah and Elisha in the apostasy of the ten tribes, and Zerubabel and Joshua after the Babylonish captivity, to whom these witnesses are particularly compared¹. By the witnesses, the Spirit of prophecy does not understand any two individual men, or two particular churches, but “ that certain persons should “ appear in every age, during the reign of Antichrist,

(1) Newton's *Dissertations on Prophecies*, vol. iii. page 134.

“ Antichrist, few indeed in number, yet sufficient
“ to establish the truth, who would openly vin-
“ dicate the truth, and clearly attest the corrup-
“ tions of the Church of Rome, and the anti-
“ christian supremacy of her head.” Accordingly,
such witnesses have appeared in every
age, from the eighth century, when the reign of
Antichrist began, down to the present moment¹.
In the eighth century, the worship of images
was vigorously opposed by the Emperors of the
East, Leo Isauricus and his son Constantine Cop-
ronymus, by the council of Constantinople,
held in the year 754, where the fathers declared,
“ That only one image was constituted by
“ Christ himself, namely, the bread and wine
“ in the Eucharist, which represent the body
“ and blood of Christ.” The second council of
Nice, indeed, established the worship of images
in the year 787; but it was condemned in the
council of Frankfort, held under Charlemagne
in the year 794. The Caroline-books were like-
wise set forth under his authority, in which va-
rious errors of the Church of Rome are con-
demned, and those truths which a Protestant
would subscribe, asserted.

In the ninth century, the supremacy of the
Pope, together with the worship of images, and
the

(1) See a full deduction of these witnesses in Newton's
Diff. vol. iii. page 148 to 196.

the invocation of saints, were opposed by the Emperors of the East, Nicephorus, Leo, Armenius, Michael, Balbus, and Theophilus, and by the Emperors of the West, Charles the Great, and Lewis the Pious. The council of Paris, held in the year 824, agreed with the council of Frankfort, in condemning that second council of Nice, and the worship of images. The doctrine of transubstantiation first advanced in the West, by Paschasius Radbertus, Abbot of Corbie, in this century, was strenuously opposed by Rabanus Maurus, Archbishop of Mentz, by Bertramus, a Monk of Corbie, and Johannes Scotus. In this age too lived Claud, Bishop of Turin, who, in his numerous writings, exposed the errors of the church of Rome, and vindicated the truth. He may be said to have sown the seeds of reformation in his diocese; and his doctrines took deep root, especially in the vallies of Piedmont, where they continued to flourish for several centuries.

In the tenth century, severals in Germany, France and England, maintained the decrees of the council of Frankfort and Paris, against the worship of images. In the year 909, a council was held at Troly, a village near Soissons in France. They concluded with a profession of those things which Christians ought to believe and practise; and in that profession are

none

none of those things which constitute the sum of Popish doctrine. In this age too, Heringer, Abbot of Lobes, near Liege, wrote expressly against the doctrine of transubstantiation, as did also Alfric in England.

Early in the eleventh century, there appeared at Orleans some heretics, as they were called, who maintained, that the consecration of the priest could not change the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, and that it was unprofitable to pray to saints and angels. They were condemned by the council of Orleans, in the year 1017. Not long after these, appeared other heretics in Flanders, who were also condemned by the synod of Arras, in the year 1025. They denied the reality of the body and blood of Christ in the eucharist. They gave no religious worship to the cross, to images, to temples, or altars. They denied purgatory, and the efficacy of penance to absolve the deceased from their sins. Berengarius, a native of Tours, and Archdeacon of Angiers, wrote professedly against the doctrine of transubstantiation, and called the church of Rome “a church of malignants, the council “of vanity, and the seat of Satan.”

In the twelfth century, Fluentius, Bishop of Florence, taught publicly, that Antichrist was come into the world. St. Bernard inveighed loudly

loudly against the corruptions of the clergy, and the tyranny of the Popes, saying, “that “ they were the ministers of Christ, and served “ Antichrist.” Joachim of Calabria gave a discourse concerning Antichrist and the Apocalypse, to Richard I. of England, at Messina, on his way to Palestine, in which he said, “that “ Antichrist was already born in the city of “ Rome, and that he would be advanced to “ the apostolical chair, and exalted above all “ that is called God, or is worshipped.” Peter de Bruis and Hcnry his disciple, taught in several parts of France, “That the doctrine of “ transubstantiation is false; that prayers and “ masses for the dead are unprofitable; that “ priests and monks ought to marry; that ve- “ neration for crossees is superstition.” For these doctrines, the one was burnt, and the other imprisoned for life. Arnold of Brescia held opinions contrary to those of the church concerning the sacrament, and preached mightily against the temporal power and jurisdiction of the Pope and the clergy, for which he was burnt at Rome, in the year 1155, and his ashes were thrown into the Tyber, to prevent the people from expressing any veneration for his relics. But the chief witnesses of this age were the Waldenses, so called, from Peter Waldo, a rich citizen of Lyons, and a considerable

considerable leader of the sect, and the Albigenses, who received their name from Alby, a city of Languedoc.

In the thirteenth century, the Waldenses and Albigenses multiplied so fast, and inveighed against the corruptions of the church of Rome so loudly, that a croisade was proclaimed against them, by the reigning Pope, which ended in depriving the Count of Thoulouse of his dominions. William of St Amour, a Doctor of the Sorbonne, wrote a treatise of the perils of the last times, 2 Tim. iii. 1. in which he applies the prophecy to the mendicant orders of his own time. In this age too lived Robert Greathead, Bishop of Lincoln, who saw so clearly into the prophecy concerning Antichrist, that the Pope and Antichrist were his dying words.

The Waldenses and Albigenses continued to multiply in the fourteenth century ; and being persecuted in their own country, fled for refuge to other nations. They were denominated Lollards in Germany, from one Walter Lollard, who preached about the year 1315, against the authority of the Pope, the intercession of saints, the mass, extreme unction, and other ceremonies of the church of Rome, and was burnt alive at Cologne, in the year 1322. The same doctrines were taught in England, and spread over

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Europe by the famous John Wickliff, rector of Lutterworth.

In the fifteenth century, Sawtre, parish-priest of St Osith in London, was the first burnt for heresy in England, in the reign of Henry IV. A few years afterwards, Thomas Badby was convicted of heresy, and burnt in Smithfield. In the next reign, Sir John Oldcastle, Baron of Cobham, was charged with being an abettor of the Lollards, and examined before the Archbishop of Canterbury. He declared against transubstantiation, penances, the worshipping of the cross, the power of the keys, and asserted that the Pope was Antichrist. He was denounced a heretic, and delivered over to the secular power. Before the day appointed for his execution, he escaped out of prison, but was afterwards taken, hanged as a traitor, and burnt hanging as a heretic. In this age too, John Hus and Jerom of Prague maintained and propagated the doctrines of Wickliff, for which they were burnt as heretics by the council of Constance, and suffered death with heroic fortitude.

In the sixteenth century began the Reformation; and from that period the united voice of the Protestant world bears witness to the corruptions of the church of Rome. Nor is it unworthy of remark, that the name of Protestants was given without any reference to the prophecy; yet it

is of much the same import with that of witnesses, the term applied in the prophecy to Christ's faithful followers during the reign of Antichrist. Besides the general voice of the Protestant world, certain persons have, in the present and the preceding century, directed the attention of mankind to the scripture prophecies, concerning the Antichristianism of the Papacy, and church of Rome, which became the more necessary, as the indolence of some and the artifice of others had almost lulled Protestants asleep: and the influence of fashion had drawn a veil over these prophecies, in the seventeenth century, almost as impenetrable to the generality, as the ignorance which obscured them in former ages. Of these, in the preceding century, were Joseph Mede, a fellow of Christ's College, in Cambridge, a man who seems to have understood the prophecies better than any who appeared before him since the days of the apostles, Peter Jurieu, one of the ministers of Rotterdam, a French refugee, James Durham, one of the ministers of Glasgow. I might also mention the famous Lord Napier, the discoverer of the logarithms, who wrote a treatise on the Apocalypse, published at Edinburgh, in the year 1645.

In the present century, the celebrated Sir Isaac Newton, Charles Daubuz, vicar of Brotherton,

therton, in Yorkshire, and Moses Lowman, each of whom has written a treatise on the Apocalypse; and still nearer our own times, Thomas Newton, late bishop of Bristol, in his *Dissertations on Prophecies*, published in 1767; Samuel Halifax, late Bishop of Gloucester, and Richard Hurd, present Bishop of Worcester, in their Sermons at Lincoln's Inn Lectures.

SECTION V.

Of the Woman hid in the Wilderness.

A third view of Christ's faithful followers is given us in Rev. xii. 6. and 14. " And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days."—" And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place; where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." The woman represents the Church of Christ, considered as a community or collective body; as the seed of the woman represents the individual members of that community. Her flight to the wilderness is an allusion to the departure of

of Israel out of Egypt. When they were delivered from the oppression of Pharaoh, called the great dragon, they were led into the wilderness, of which God says, “ I have carried thee “ as on eagles wings, to myself.” So the church, after her deliverance from the persecution of the Pagan Raman empire, called the red dragon, set out for the wilderness ; that is, as the visible church declined from the doctrines and precepts of Christianity, the true church of Christ gradually retired from the view of men, till at length, when the visible church had avowedly submitted to the government of Anti-christ, the true church of Christ, considered as a community, wholly disappeared. She remains in that state 1260 days, and these are the same in which the witnesses prophecy, and the beast reigns.

The state of the church in the wilderness conveys this idea, “ That the church as a community “ or body politic, during the period mention- “ ed, shall be invisible in the world,” just as Israel, during their abode in the wilderness, had no manner of intercourse with other nations, and therefore as a people were unknown. The church is formed into a community, by ties external and internal, “ there is one body and one “ Spirit,” Eph. iv. 4. The external ties are government, doctrine, and ordinances ; “ there is “ one

“ one Lord, one faith, one baptism.” The internal tie is the Spirit of God, which animates the great Head of the church, and every real member of his mystical body ; so that “ one God and Father of all, who is above all, is likewise through all, and in all.” Now, in the state of the church in the wilderness, the former tie is dissolved, the latter only subsists. She is visible in that state as a community, only to the eyes of that God who is “ through all, and in all.” This state of the church may be considered on the one hand as a calamity, in as far as she appears no longer with that spiritual beauty which adorned her during the persecution she experienced from pagan Rome, nor with that outward prosperity which she enjoyed upon her deliverance. But on the other hand, it may be considered as a blessing, on account of the advantages that result from it ; for “ her place is prepared of God,” that is, he has appointed and foretold this state ; so that the event corresponding with the prediction, ought to strengthen the faith of men, which might otherwise be shaken by her low condition. Again, she is there “ fed of God.” As Israel, fed in the wilderness by the immediate hand of God, without the ordinary means, learned “ that man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God ;” so the individual

vidual members of the church in the wilderness, fed by the word and Spirit of God, without the outward ordinances, (which as dispensed in the visible church were defiled), learned that intimate dependence upon, and converse with the Deity, in which the life and spirit of religion consist. This is a most important lesson; for we shall find, that the decline and ruin of real religion, among the generality of mankind in every period, arose from their taking the body for the spirit. The religion which Noah communicated pure to his posterity, was some time after lost among the nations. Their zeal in forming and worshipping images, as representations of the Deity, withdrew their attention and affection from the Deity himself. The Jewish church was constituted pure, and received clearer views of the truth than Noah; but even after they were weaned from image worship, a zealous attachment to those outward ordinances which God had enjoined, together with ceremonies of their own invention, made them lose sight of the spirit of their religion. Hence God reproves them: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord," Isa. i. 11. The Christian church was formed not only a pure but a spiritual society, set free from those types and shadows which veiled the truth in

in the Jewish church, expressly told, “ That God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” Yet notwithstanding these advantages, the spirit of religion began to decline, from an idolatrous veneration for the outward ordinances, which were only the vehicles of it. In process of time, these were multiplied by ceremonies of human invention, till at length they formed that mass of impieties, puerilities, and absurdities which constitutes the Popish worship ; a mass which may be fitly compared to an overgrown body, dressed out with ornaments of human invention, without one spark of the vital spirit. Seeing then how prone mankind have been in every age to mistake the body for the spirit of religion, withdrawing the body or the ordinances of religion for a season, must appear a mean worthy of divine wisdom to counteract the disorder. Another advantage resulting from the state of the church in the wilderness is, that “ she is safe from the face of the serpent.” The grand adversary represented by the serpent, first directed his fury against the progress of the gospel, lest Christianity should be spread in the world, and exerted for this end the force of the civil and military government, by his deputies the Pagan Roman Emperors. But in process of time, a regenerate son of the church, Constantine,

tine, was advanced to the throne of the Roman empire, Satan and his votaries were deprived of all power, civil and ecclesiastical, and Christianity became the established religion of the empire, (Rev. xii. 1.—5 and 7.—9.) Satan baffled in his first attempt, directed his violence, in a more hidden manner, against the church as a community, endeavoured to corrupt her in her government, doctrine and ordinances, that these might prove destructive to the spirit of her seed, even when they multiplied in appearance. For this purpose, he excited church-members to divisions and heresies, and filled the governors of the church with a worldly spirit, intent on self-gratification. He proved successful by this artifice against the great body of professed Christians, for he raised within the visible church that huge Colossus of despotism, the Roman hierarchy, standing upon the legs of ambition and avarice. To preserve the true church of Christ in this imminent danger, God withdrew her into the wilderness, that is, dissolved her external ties, that she should not be visible as a community; while at the same time he preserves the individuals of her offspring, by his word and Spirit. In this situation, “she is safe “from the face of the serpent.”

This prophetic representation serves to elucidate several circumstances respecting the church

in our times, which viewed without this light furnish a handle to the enemies, and stagger the faith of the friends of real religion.

Our adversaries account the visibility of their church as a community from the apostles days, a demonstration of its being the true church; while they ask us with triumph, where was your church before Luther? The prophecy furnishes a direct answer. The true church of Christ ought to be invisible as a community for a period of 1260 years, and during all that time, a harlot, pretending to be the spouse of Jesus Christ, ought to propagate her idolatries successfully and extensively throughout the world.

The divisions among protestants have been urged by their adversaries as an argument against them; and the ineffectual efforts of learned and pious men to unite them into one community, have proved stumbling blocks to the faith of some of their friends. But by the prophetic representation, matters ought to be as they are. Had Protestants united together into one society, the church of Christ would be visible as a community, which, during the currency of the 1260 years, would flatly contradict the prophecy; but the several Protestant churches having no connection with each other, in government and ordinances, like the ancient church, they constitute only individual members of the

universal

universal church, which, as a body politic, is invisible now, as it was in the tenth century.

While the prophetic representation should reconcile us to a certain degree of separation among protestants, during the currency of the 1260 years it ought to remove wholly the violence of party spirit, and every degree of bitterness and rancour which protestants have too frequently shewed to each other. A violent party spirit is founded on this principle, that those who possess it are the true church of Christ. Hence they argue, that those who separate from them are schismatics or heretics, and therefore ought to be treated as “heathens and publicans.” But the ground of this reasoning, according to the prophecy, is false; no particular church or party now on earth may claim the exclusive privileges of the universal church; whoever does, acts the part of a daughter, usurping the place of the mother, and requiring that subjection of her sisters which the law of God does not require.

That the several Protestant churches have considerably declined from their original purity, is a truth which will be readily acknowledged by those who are acquainted with real religion; yet it is a circumstance which we might have expected, from the prophecy. God has promised to preserve his elect uncorrupted as individuals, but that promise extends not to communities.

munities. The universal church, as a community, is invisible, in order to be “safe from the “face of the serpent.” Which implies, that when a member of the universal church becomes visible as a society, she shall not be safe, but be corrupted more or less by the same artifices which overwhelmed the great body of professed Christians, and raised among them the antichristian hierarchy.

Now, societies may separate from those already established *ad infinitum*, but the spirit of Antichrist will pervade all ; a spirit of ambition and covetousness in the rulers, of sensuality and hypocrisy in the members, will in some degree infect every community, during the currency of the 1260 years. But when these come to a period, the universal church shall again become visible as a community, extended over the whole earth, “clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and “terrible as an army with banners.”

CHAPTER II.

Of future Events which shall take Place betwixt the present Period and the sounding of the seventh Trumpet.

I PROCEED now to explore the regions of futurity. Regions covered with a gloom impenetrable to human foresight, but rendered visible by the light of truth.

O Thou who art the Father of Lights, who giveth wisdom to those that ask it, seeing Thou hast deigned to reveal things future, for the consolation of Thy church and people, “make darkness light before me, and the crooked places straight,” in exploring what Thou hast revealed. Guard me against the illusions of fancy, and the bias of passion, and grant me the entrance of Thy Word, which giveth light.

There are two remarkable events to be accomplished within the 1260 years of Antichrist’s reign, a gradual waste of his kingdom, and the death of the witnesses. The former is progressive; it has already commenced, and runs co-eval with the remaining years of this period. The latter coincides with the close of it.

SECTION I.

A gradual waste of the Kingdom of Antichrist.

This is laid before us in these expressions of the apostle, 2 Thess. ii. 8. "And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth." These not only imply a waste of his empire, but likewise the manner in which it shall be carried on, not by force of arms, but by the influence of the truth, called the Spirit of the Lord's mouth. God is the author of truth, taken in its most extensive sense, not only of revealed religion contained in his word, which is termed the truth, John xvii. but likewise of natural religion, of truths respecting sound morals, good government and useful arts; of truths discovered by the spirit of adventure, and the researches of philosophy. Now the prophecy intimates, that the knowledge of those truths extensively diffused, which regard the happiness of mankind as individuals or members of society, shall gradually consume the empire of Antichrist, founded on ignorance, shall certainly, but gently, unloose the chains wreathed round mankind by delusion,

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Were I to judge from present appearance only, I would readily conclude, that the tyranny of Antichrist would come to a period before the close of the next century ; but the reasons already advanced, for fixing the commencement of his reign, induce me to believe, that the 1260 years allotted for it, shall not be finished until the close of the twentieth century.

SECTION II.

The Death of the Witnesses.

ABOUT the year 1994, another remarkable event shall take place, namely, the death of the witnesses. This event is laid before us, Rev. xi. 7. 10. " When they shall have finished their " testimony, (when they are about to finish " their testimony) the beast that ascendeth out " of the bottomless pit shall make war against " them, and shall overcome them and kill " them'."

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(1) Some have supposed, that this prophecy has been repeatedly accomplished in the death of those persons who witnessed against the corruptions of the church of Rome, during the currency of the 1260 years, and that there was as frequently a resurrection when persons of a simi-

lar

The application of this prophecy to any event already past, must be erroneous ; for the death is followed by the resurrection, which coincides with the close of the forty-two months of the beast's reign, and the end of the sixth trumpet. While, therefore, the Pope reigns, and the Ottoman empire is in existence, we may rest assured, that the resurrection intended here has not taken place, so neither has the death which immediately precedes it.

The death of the witnesses must be understood in a mystical sense, to make it conformable to the resurrection which follows it ; so it signifies

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ilar spirit arose after them. But that the prophecy points to a particular time, namely, the close of the 1260 years, and can apply to no other, is evident, on the following grounds : 1st, The expression *σταυ τελεσωσι*, when they are about to finish, refers to the close of the time allotted for their mourning prophecy : 2^d, They continue dead for a determined time, three days and a half, which cannot apply to every person put to death during the currency of the 1260 years : 3^d, Their death is followed by their resurrection ; now their resurrection is described in such terms as can only apply to the close of the 1260 years : Thus they are called up to heaven, to exercise their office, by the voice of public authority. It coincides in point of time with the fall of the tenth part of the city, and the end of the second wo ; but if the resurrection is limited to a precise time, so must the death that precedes it.

a deprivation of the existence which they formerly had as members of society, that is, without entering into the *minutiæ* of the prophecy, the loss of their privileges, which the accomplishment only can explain. It may signify in general, that towards the close of the distresses which Protestants have experienced from the tyranny of papal Rome, when they begin to fancy themselves secure from further injuries, a persecution shall be set on foot by the diabolical malevolence and crafty designs of the Popish powers, which shall be carried on with violence, and in the issue shall deprive Protestantism of a legal establishment all over Europe, and eject the Protestant pastors from the exercise of their function.

The members of the church of Rome shall celebrate this event with every demonstration of joy ; for they shall reckon themselves happily delivered from troublesome monitors, who galled their conscience, by offering convincing evidence of the corruptions of their church, while their secular interests would not permit them to renounce her superstitions ; and they
“ that dwell on the earth shall rejoice over
“ them, and make merry, and shall send gifts
“ one to another, because these two prophets
“ tormented them that dwell on the earth,”
Rev. xi. But this triumph of Popery shall be

short-lived, as the persecution of Dioclesian, though the most violent, and apparently the most successful, carried on against the primitive church, by her enemies, was the last effort of expiring Paganism, so the death of the witnesses shall be the last successful effort of Popery in Europe.

SECTION III.

The Resurrection of the Witnesses.

AT the end of three years and a half, that is, in the year 1698, the event described in the preceding section is followed by the resurrection of the witnesses, Rev. xi. 11, 12.

“ And after three days and an half, the Spirit
“ of life from God entered into them, and they
“ stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon
“ them which saw them, and they heard a great
“ voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come
“ up hither, and they ascended up to heaven in
“ a cloud, and their enemies beheld them.” In
all this there is an obvious reference to the re-
surrection and ascension of our blessed Lord. The
great head of the church, after submitting to the
variety of sufferings represented in the gospels,
was in the end put to death by his enemies ;
but his death was followed by a glorious resur-
rection

rection to the life that shall never have an end, and his resurrection led to his ascension to the right hand of God, when he took possession of the kingdom promised him; so his mystical body the church, after experiencing various distresses for a course of time, by the persecutions and delusions of Antichrist, shall in the end be deprived of all political existence. But this political death shall be followed by a revival of her privileges, of which she shall never afterwards be deprived. God, who is the author of life, spiritual and natural, shall bestow the spiritual life extensively and powerfully, so that great multitudes of all the nations shall with sincerity embrace, and with boldness avow their adherence to the true religion; “The spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet.” The same God who turneth the hearts of kings as the rivers of water, shall incline the rulers of Europe at that time, to support the true religion, by the voice of public authority; they shall command the pastors of the church to exercise their function, and the people to profess their belief of the truth. “They heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither.” As persons ascending in a cloud to heaven spurn the earth beneath, so they, protected by the legal authority of the supreme powers, shall contemn

temn the machinations and the efforts employed against them, while their enemies shall see, with anguish of mind, a revolution which they cannot prevent; “ and they ascended up to heaven in “ a cloud, and their enemies beheld them.”

Two important events for the advantage of the church, shall take place at the same time with the resurrection of the witnesses. The temporal sovereignty annexed to the Papacy shall be taken away, and the Ottoman empire shall cease to exist.

S E C T I O N IV.

The Fall of the Pope's Temporal Sovereignty.

IT is represented in these words, Rev. xi. 13. “ And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell.” An earthquake in the language of prophecy, signifies a revolution: The city, and the great city, in the Apocalypse, signifies Rome. It is so called with respect to its dominion, rather than the territory within its walls. Thus, we are told verse 8. of this chapter, that our Lord was crucified in the great city. He certainly was crucified by the authority of Rome, in a province of her empire, though not within the walls. As the Roman empire represented by

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the beast has ten horns, signifying so many kingdoms, the same empire represented by a city, must consist of ten parts ;—and as in Daniel's vision, the Pope's temporal sovereignty is typified by one of these horns, so the same sovereignty here is typified by one of these ten parts. But here it may be said, Why should it signify the Pope's temporal sovereignty, rather than any other of the ten kingdoms ? Because, 1st, The fall of that sovereignty is of much greater importance to the completion of the prophecy than any, or even severals of the other kingdoms : accordingly, though severals fell away at the Reformation, I find no particular mention made of them. 2d, It is the only one of the ten whose duration is measured in the prophecy ; it is the only one, therefore, whose fall we might expect to be particularly marked. 3d, The time at which this tenth part falls, exactly corresponds with the period in which the Pope's temporal sovereignty ought to fall ; for the 42 months allotted to the reign of the seventh head, measure (as we have already seen, p. 60.) the temporal sovereignty annexed to the Papacy ; these 42 months make exactly 1260 prophetic days or years, and they coincide throughout with the 1260 years of the witnessess mourning prophecy ; but their mourning prophecy ends by their resurrection ; at the same time, therefore, the temporal

poral sovereignty ought also to end.' Accordingly, we are told, "In that same hour there "was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of "the city fell," to intimate that the resurrection of the witnesses shall be accompanied by a great revolution, which shall overturn the temporal sovereignty annexed to the Papacy. There appears a peculiar propriety in representing the temporal sovereignty here, by a tenth part of the city. Had it been represented by one of the horns, interpreters would have concluded, that some other of the kingdoms had been intended, because the Pope's sovereignty in the Apocalypse is invariably represented by the seventh head. Again had it been represented here by the seventh head, the fall of that would have implied the death of the beast; or, in other words the dissolution of the whole system of spiritual tyranny, which would have led to an error; for the spiritual jurisdiction of Antichrist is represented as subsisting after the fall of the temporal sovereignty, till it is reduced by the vials.

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(1) Some have supposed that France is intended by the tenth part of the city; the late revolution has fully proved that application to be erroneous. France is already fallen from the dominion of papal Rome; but the time of its fall does not correspond with that of the tenth part here mentioned, for the Pope reigns still, the Ottoman empire exists, and the witnesses still prophecy in sackcloth.

In the same earthquake which overturns the tenth part of the city, “ seven thousand names of men are slain.” These are (according to some), men of name ; and it is probable, that an event so humiliating to the pride of the church of Rome, as the loss of the Papal sovereignty, cannot be effected without bloodshed ; while many of the superior clergy, being the persons chiefly interested in its preservation, may be put to death in the contest : Yet I imagine, that by names of men, we are to understand societies of men, and by their death, the dissolution of such societies ; particularly, that the several monastic orders, and the societies that owe their institution to human invention, shall be done away. There are not so many separate orders as 7000 ; but every separate house, though belonging to the same order is a distinct society. If we number the several houses belonging to all the orders, over all the countries subject to the spiritual jurisdiction of Rome, they will amount to more than 7000. However, as the number seven is perfect, by the use of it, with the addition of 1000, the spirit of prophecy would intimate their great number ; and that all of them shall be dissolved. The completion of this prophecy will not appear improbable, when we reflect, that the Popish sovereigns have obliged the Pontiff, by his own decree, to dissolve the

society

society of Jesuits, though they might be justly styled the Janizaries of the Papal authority ; and when we farther consider, that politicians in Popish countries begin to esteem the several religious orders as useless burdens upon the state, if not absolute nuisances to society.

S E C T I O N V.

The fall of the Ottoman Empire.

The same hour in which the witnesses arise, and an earthquake overturns the tenth part of the city, it is said, Rev. xi. 14. “ the second wo is “ past.” Now, by the second wo, or sixth trumpet, is meant the Ottoman empire. Whether it shall fall suddenly, and in consequence of the same revolution which dethrones the Pope, or if it shall gradually waste away, and finally cease to exist at the same time, though unconnected with that revolution as the cause, the accomplishment of the prophecy only can determine. They are represented clearly as contemporary events, but the expressions do not necessarily imply that they shall both be produced by the same cause. I find similar expressions used (Rev. ix. 12.) concerning the Saracen empire, “ One wo is past.” But the Saracen empire

pire gradually wasted away, and at length wholly disappeared about the time the Turks were in four small dynasties on the banks of the Euphrates, ready to push their conquests westward. Just so the Ottoman empire may gradually decline and receive several humiliating blows, before the fall of the Pope's sovereignty ; but at that time it shall wholly cease to be a scourge to mankind in general, or to Christians in particular.

Z

C H A P-

CHAPTER III.

Of the Events which take Place from the sounding of the seventh Trumpet, to the fifth Vial, or the Destruction of Rome.

WHEN these three remarkable events are accomplished, they may be considered as evident signs of the famous æra solemnly announced to the prophet Daniel, chap. xii. 6. 7. "And one said to the man cloathed in linen, which was upon the water of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard the man cloathed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand, and his left hand unto heaven, and swear by him that liveth for ever, that it shall be for a time, times, and an half: and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished." The appeal to heaven by a solemn oath, intimates the certainty of the promised deliverance, in the appointed season, that the united efforts of earth and hell cannot prevent it, nor any unforeseen circumstances delay it, a moment longer than God has appointed

appointed. The continuance of the preceding distress is measured by time, times, and an half, three prophetic years and an half, or 1260 years, calculating from the beginning of Antichrist's reign, formerly represented by the little horn, whose duration is measured by the same numbers, Dan. vii. 25. At the close of which, God shall put an end to the persecutions of Antichrist, which previously scattered the power of his holy people, so that they never could appear either in force or in numbers.

The same æra, with similar circumstances of solemnity, is represented to the apostle John, Rev. x. 5, 6, 7. "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea, and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven, and swear by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created the heaven and the things that therein are, and the earth and the things that therein are, and the sea and things which are therein, that there should be time no longer, (that the time should not be yet). But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." Here the æra of deliverance is fixed at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, but that event takes place immediately after the remarkable events already mentioned. In the same hour that the witnesses

nesses arise from the dead,—that an earthquake overturns the tenth part of the city,—that the second wo is past,—behold the third wo cometh quickly. What is meant by that wo we learn from what follows: “ And the seventh angel “ sounded,” then the glorious deliverance effected by his sounding is laid before us in general terms: “ And there were great voices in “ heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world “ are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and “ of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and “ ever;” Rev. xi. 15.

This period may be properly called the æra of prophecy. The completion of Scripture prophecy which before this period was like the dawn of the morning, evident only to a few, shall now shine with the fulgence of noon-day and appear convincing to every intelligent and unprejudiced mind; it shall therefore prove the great mean in the hand of God, of giving success to the gospel among the benighted nations of the world, and breaking down the remaining bulwarks of superstition and idolatry; from thenceforward, “ the testimony of Jesus “ shall be the spirit of prophecy.

At this period likewise, the dates annexed to the several remarkable events, may be calculated with certainty. By going back 1260 years, the beginning of Antichrist’s reign may be discovered

vered with precision, and most of the other calculations refer to that æra ; whereas, at present the dates are unavoidably involved in a certain degree of obscurity, and give room for various conjectures.

S E C T I O N I.

State of the Church at the sounding of the seventh Trumpet.

FROM this period to the commencement of the Millennium, the prophecies continue to give a twofold view of the church. On the one hand, they represent the progress of the gospel ; on the other, they describe the steps by which spiritual Babylon is brought to its final ruin, and at length all opposition to the truth is overcome.

The first view given of the progress of the gospel, we have, Rev. vii. 9. “ After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, cloathed with white robes, and palms in their hands ; and cried with a loud voice, saying salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne,

“ throne, and unto the Lamb.—And one of the
“ elders answered, saying unto me, What are
“ these which are arrayed in white robes ? and
“ whence came they ? And I said unto him,
“ Sir thou knowest. And he said to me, These
“ are they which came out of great tribulation,
“ and have washed their robes, and made them
“ white in the blood of the Lamb : Therefore
“ are they before the throne of God, and serve
“ him day and night in his temple ; and he
“ that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among
“ them. They shall hunger no more, neither
“ thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on
“ them, nor any heat : For the Lamb who is
“ in the midst of the throne, shall feed them,
“ and shall lead them unto living fountains of
“ waters ; and God shall wipe away all tears
“ from their eyes.”

The multitude, with palms in their hands, are represented here as succeeding the 144,000 sealed ones. *After this*, I beheld also a great multitude. The 144,000 sealed ones run along the whole period of Antichrist's reign, Rev. xiv. 1. ; but at the close of his reign, they give place to the palm-bearing multitude. The description of these, compared with that of the sealed ones, shews how different the state of the church now is, from its former condition, ever since Christians began to decline from purity of faith and manners.

ners. Previous to this æra, real Christians were few, as the great body who professed Christianity were destitute of the spirit of it ; but now they are a great multitude, which no man can number of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues. Formerly the true servants of God worshipped him sincerely in secret, but their voice was not heard in the world, for fear of the persecution of their enemies ; but now they cry with a loud voice, making a public profession of their faith, and attending on the ordinances of religion, without fear or danger. Formerly true Christians were traduced as schismatics, heretics, and persons abominably wicked ; but now their innocence is vindicated, their righteousness is brought forth as the noon-day ; for they all, and they only, are esteemed righteous, who are justified by the blood of Christ, and sanctified by the influence of his Spirit. They are cloathed with white robes, washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. Formerly the faithful followers of Christ were every where persecuted and overcome ; but now they hold palms in their hands, as emblems of victory over their enemies. They were formerly in great tribulation. They experienced every kind of distress outward and inward. They were exposed by the virulence of their enemies, to fire and sword, to hunger and thirst, to cold and

and nakedness. Nor were these the greatest evils ; for they were frequently exposed to a scarcity of the bread of life, when deprived of ordinances ; so that their souls were ready to perish. But now they shall be delivered from whatever might prove injurious, to their temporal or spiritual happiness : “ Neither shall the sun “ light on them, nor any heat. They shall stand “ before the throne of God, and serve him day “ and night in his temple ; and he that sitteth on “ the throne shall dwell among them.” The ordinances of God shall be established in purity ; in these men shall place their delight, and on them God shall bestow his presence. “ The tabernacle of God shall be with men, and he shall “ dwell among them.” They shall experience no more scarcity of the bread of life ; “ they shall “ hunger no more, neither thirst any more.” The Redeemer shall himself feed his people. On them he shall bestow liberally the comfortable and gracious influences of his Spirit, which shall prove a well of water springing up unto everlasting life ; and the tears which they shed for the desolation of the church, as well as for their own particular distresses, shall be wiped away. “ The Lamb who is in the midst of the “ throne shall feed them, and shall lead them “ into

(1) John iv. 14. and vii. 38. 39.

“ into living fountains of waters, and God shall
“ wipe away all tears from thier eyes.” We
have

(1) Lowman and Newton are of opinion, that the multitude, with palms in their hands, represent the glory of a future world, particularly the happiness of those persons put to death by the Pagan Roman emperors ; but I cannot agree with them in opinion, for the following reasons : 1st, The happiness of the martyrs in their glorified state is represented in the first seal ; it appears to me unnecessary to introduce them here again. 2^d, If they were introduced in this place, they would have been mentioned before the 144,000 sealed ones ; because they were possessed of happiness previous to the admission of converts into the church in the age of Constantine, whereas, in the vision, they are represented as following the sealed ones : “ After these things, I saw.” That interpretation cannot be just, which obliges one to reverse the order of the vision. 3^d, The expressions which describe the happiness of this multitude, may appear at first view too strong to apply to the church militant ; it is accordingly on this ground they have been referred to the church triumphant ; yet they are obviously borrowed from the prophet Isaiah, and when compared with the context in the prophet, they certainly refer to the church militant, and not to the church triumphant. Now, it is reasonable to suppose they have the same meaning here. Thus, verses 15, 16, are borrowed from Isaiah xlix. 10. “ They shall not hunger, “ nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor sun smite them ; “ for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even “ by the springs of water shall he guide them.” And
verse

have another view of the progress of the gospel,
Rev. xiv. 6, 7. "And I saw another angel fly
" in the midst of heaven, having the everlast-
" ing gospel to preach unto them that dwell on
" the earth, and to every nation, and kindred,
" and tongue, and people, saying with a loud
" voice, Fear God, and give glory to him ; for
" the hour of his judgment is come : and wor-
" ship him that made heaven, and earth, and
" the sea, and the fountains of water'."

This

verse 17. is taken from Isa. xxv. 8. "And the Lord
" God will wipe away tears from off all faces, and the
" rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the
" earth." 4th, It appears more consistent with the gene-
ral design of the Apocalypse, to consider the multitude,
with palms in their hands, as the church militant issuing
from a storm ; for the general design is to shew, that the
church shall continue, in defiance of all opposition, and
shall at length become triumphant on the earth, previous
to the general judgment.

(1) The opinion of the excellent Mede, in which he is followed by B. Newton and others, is, that the ministry of this angel was fulfilled, in the public and strenuous opposition made to the worship of images, by the Emperors of the East, as well as by Charlemagne and the bishops of France in the eighth century. But neither the time nor the circumstances of this angel's ministry can accord with that interpretation ; while, on the other hand, the time and

This angel represents the ministers of the word, for the ministry of reconciliation is committed to earthen vessels. He flies in the midst of heaven to represent the support of civil authority, and the great success of his ministry. His commission to preach, extends to all that dwell on the earth; and accordingly he propagates with celerity a knowledge of the truth to every

and the circumstances coincide with the sounding of the seventh trumpet. *1st*, The ministry of this angel must coincide with the palm bearing multitude: For, as Mede argues, the immediate consequents of the same antecedents must be contemporary. Now, the 144,000 sealed ones immediately precede the multitude with palms in their hands, chap. vii. The same 144,000 sealed ones immediately precede the voice of this angel, chap. xiv.; therefore the multitude with palms in their hands, and the voice of this angel must be contemporary. *2d*, The voice of this angel must coincide with the resurrection of the witnesses; for the 144,000 sealed contemporaneously with the witnesses mourning prophecy, their mourning prophecy is followed by their resurrection and ascension to heaven; so here the 144,000 sealed ones are followed by the voice of an angel flying through the midst of heaven; therefore the resurrection of the witnesses, and the voice of this angel must coincide. *3d*, The same argument proves that the voice of this angel coincides with the fall of the Pope's temporal sovereignty, or the tenth part of the city; for the 144,000 sealed ones are contemporary with the 42 months of the beast; the immediate consequent

every nation, and tongue, and people. The subject of his ministry is the gospel, the glad tidings of a Saviour, containing the whole counsel of God, respecting the salvation of men. The gospel was at all times everlasting, in as far as the plan of it was laid before the foundations of the world. The Author of it is the Everlasting God, and the blessing conferred on those that receive it,

consequent of these 42 months is the fall of the tenth part of the city ; and here the immediate consequent of the same 144,000 sealed ones is the voice of this angel, which is further confirmed by the expressions of the angel, “the “ hour of his judgment is come,” expressly referring to the judgment then recently inflicted on the beast. 4th, However specious the application of Mede may be, we shall find, that the circumstances of the event to which he alludes, if minutely examined, will not suit the voice of this angel. This angel preaches the gospel, but the opposition of the eastern Emperors, as well as of Charlemagne and the bishops of France, was too limited to justify this expression, that they preached the gospel. They joined issue with the degenerate church in many tenets and practices, though they opposed her in some of the grossest and most recent corruptions. Again, the term Everlasting here, seems to intimate the perpetual success of the gospel, from the period of its publication by this angel. Now, the attempt of the Emperors of the East, and Charlemagne, were as ineffectual as they were partial ; whereas it is obvious from the prophecies,

it is eternal life ; but at this time it may be termed everlasting, in regard it shall never be again obscured by the subtilty of the dragon, and his emissary the beast. This angel preaches the gospel so as to counteract the poison of Babylon's doctrine. The doctrines of Popery impress the mind with the fears of purgatory, and of devils, together with an excessive reverence of saints and angels, which have a tendency to banish from the mind the fear of God. But this angel recalls the attention of mankind to that principle which is the source of every duty we owe to God, and to mankind ; saying with a loud voice, Fear God. He adds, Give glory to him. God is glorified by obedience to his commandments, but the church of Rome requires of her votaries implicit submission to her authority. So that it may be said of them, as of the apostate Jews, “ Ye reject the commandments of God, that ye may keep your own traditions.

phecies, that after the fall of the beast, the gospel shall be propagated, so as never to be again obscured. Farther, the argument by which this angel enforces his preaching, cannot apply to the opposition made by the Emperors of the East, and Charlemagne. There was no Judgment at that time inflicted on the beast : on the contrary, he was then hastily advancing to the zenith of his glory.

“ traditions. In vain ye worship me, teaching
“ for doctrines the commandments of men.” But this angel directs men to the true rule of
obedience, the divine precepts : “ And worship
“ him that made heaven and earth, the sea, and
“ the fountains of waters.” The worship of
God is the great mean by which obedience of
heart and life is maintained. And in this like-
wise the church of Rome grossly misleads the
members of her communion, by enjoining the
worship of angels and saints, and even of images
and relicts ; but this angel exhorts men in the
language of God’s law, “ Thou shall worship the
“ Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve ;”
because, to him alone worship is due, who
is the great Creator and Preserver of all things,
the bountiful Benefactor, from whom every
blessing, temporal and spiritual, flows ; while
he urges these truths with success, from the
completion of prophecy, made manifest in the
judgment of God so recently inflicted on the
beast, by depriving him of his temporal sove-
reignty.

A third view, representing the efficacy of the
gospel in these times, is laid before us, Rev. xi.
19. “ And the temple of God was opened in hea-
“ ven, and there was seen in his temple the ark
“ of his testament.” This took place immediately
after

after the seventh trumpet sounded, as we learn from verse 15. and represents the clearer manifestation of himself, which God will bestow on his faithful worshippers at the time specified. Under the law, the high priest only once a year was permitted to see the ark. The veil which separated the most holy from the holy place, prevented the priest, who officiated daily in the sanctuary, from seeing it ; and if the high priest entered within the second veil, except on the day of expiation, he died for his temerity, Lev. xvi. 2. But under the New Testament dispensation, there is access for every real Christian " to the holiest of all, by the blood of " Jesus," Heb. x. 19. This access was typified by the rending of the veil at Christ's death, Mat. xxvii. 51. Accordingly it has been the privilege of some individuals, in all periods of the Christian church, to be admitted to the holiest of all, and to see the ark; but the extending of this privilege to the whole body of the church is reserved for that period in which the seventh trumpet shall sound. The primitive church is represented by worshippers in the inner court of the temple, meaning the court of the priests in which the altar of burnt-offering stood, Rev. xi. 1. However that does not imply access to the holiest of all, to see the ark. In the time following the reign of Antichrist,

and

and during his reign, the temple and the inner court are shut, the outer court is trodden under foot by the Gentiles, (verse 2.), and the few witnesses faithful to God on earth, are mingled with those Gentiles, prophesying in sackcloth. But when the seventh trumpet sounds, all the Gentiles are expelled from the outer court, and there is not only access to the inner court, as formerly, but the door of the sanctuary is thrown open, even the inner-vail is removed, and all the worshippers are permitted to see the ark of the covenant ; that is, God shall at that period give clearer views of his truth, and more comfortable manifestations of his presence, than at any former period, by bestowing more generally and more liberally the influences of his holy Spirit.

The same truth is laid before us by another type borrowed from the Mosaic œconomy, applicable to the same period, Rev. xv. 8. “ And “ the temple was filled with smoke from the “ glory of God, and from his power ; that no “ man was able to enter into the temple till the “ seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfil-“ led.” The opening of the temple is mentioned verse 5. in almost the same words used Rev. xi. 19. There is a reference to that passage, in order to shew the time of opening the temple ; namely, when the seventh trumpet sounds. Out of the temple came the seven an-
gels,

gels having the seven last plagues. Immediately the temple is filled with smoke, or a cloud, which continues during the time that the angels are pouring out the vials. This unquestionably refers to the consecration of the tabernacle by Moses, and the dedication of the temple by Solomon. On these two memorable occasions, the house of God was filled with a cloud, so that even the ministers of the sanctuary could not enter it ; the cloud was a symbol of the divine presence ; it then filled the house ; whereas it commonly appeared only on the mercy-seat within the vail, to intimate that his presence on that occasion was bestowed more abundantly than on ordinary occasions. That ministers of the sanctuary could not enter in, proceeded from their deep reverence for that visible display of the divine presence ; just so when the seventh trumpet sounds, the church of Christ, purified from the defilements of Antichrist, and consecrated to Christ, shall be acknowledged by peculiar manifestations of God's presence, and the liberal influences of his Spirit.

These three representations afford a view tolerably clear, of the state of the church immediately after the sounding of the seventh trumpet. The first shews the gospel propagated to kindreds, tongues, nations, and languages, and an innumerable multitude of converts introdu-

ced into the church. The second shews the means by which they are introduced, the ministry of the word, supported by the civil authority, spread by the zeal of the preachers, and urged upon the rational mind by the completion of prophecy. The third shews the happiness of the church then constituted, arising from the clear manifestations of the divine presence given by the liberal influences of the Holy Spirit.

SECTION II.

Observations on the Vials.

LET us now take a view of the progressive steps by which Antichristianism is brought to its final ruin. These are represented by the vials, and the vials are included in the seventh trumpet, so that they begin to be poured out when the angel preaching the gospel flies through the midst of heaven. Before I offer a particular illustration of each, I shall make some general observations on the whole, to shew the grounds on which I attempt to illustrate them.

1. It is obvious, that the application of any or of all these vials to events already past, must be erroneous; for all are included in the seventh

venth trumpet, and the seventh trumpet has not yet sounded ; it is then only when the second wo is past, that the third wo cometh, Rev. xi. 14.

2. That the vials begin immediately as the seventh trumpet sounds, and follow one another rapidly, or at shorter intervals of time than those that intervened betwixt the plagues of the trumpets, we may infer from that expression, the third wo cometh *quickly*. That they follow one another after long periods of time, or at equal intervals, which Jurien infers from the term vial, supposing it an allusion to an hour-glass, is a mere play of imagination, without the smallest support from Scripture.

3. All the vials have the same object, namely, to destroy the remaining power of the Antichristian system, called the Beast. The first brings a grievous sore upon them that had the mark of the beast, and worshipped his image, Rev. xvi. 2. ; and when the last is poured out, the beast and false prophet are taken and cast into the lake of fire, Rev. xix. 20.

4. Most of the vials have an obvious reference to the plagues of Egypt ; now the empire of the beast is “ spiritually called Egypt,” Rev. xi. 8. We may therefore infer that the plagues which were inflicted corporally, or, in a literal sense, on the Egyptians, shall be inflicted spiritually on the followers of Antichrist.

5. There

5. There is a manifest resemblance betwixt the first four trumpets and the first four vials. The resemblance implies, that the power of Papal Rome shall be reduced gradually by steps, in some respects similar to those which destroyed the dominion of Imperial Rome. The subjects affected by the plagues are the same in both. Thus, the first trumpet brought a plague on the earth, the second on the sea, the third on the rivers, the fourth on the sun ; so the first vial brings a plague on the earth, the second on the sea, the third on the rivers, the fourth on the sun. If therefore we know what is meant by the earth, sea, rivers, and sun, in the government of Imperial Rome, we can be at no loss to discover what is parallel to these in the government of Papal Rome. The effects produced are the same in the second and the third of both. The second trumpet turns the sea to blood, so the second vial ; the third trumpet makes the rivers bitter, so that they are pernicious to life ; the third vial turns the rivers to blood, which produces a similar effect, but in a higher degree. The effects of the first and fourth in both are indeed different. The first trumpet burns the earth and its productions ; the first vial occasions a noisome sore. The fourth trumpet decreases the heat of the sun ; the fourth vial increases it. However, the contrast

trast here is so striking, that it makes the meaning as obvious as the resemblance in the two preceding.

The three last vials have no resemblance to any of the trumpets; but to compensate the want of this index to their meaning, an enlarged explication of each is added. The whole of chap. xviii. is a comment on the fifth vial; chap. xix. from the beginning to the 10th verse, is an illustration of the sixth vial; and from the 11th verse to the close of the same chapter is a farther account of the seventh vial. Add to this, that the earthquake or revolution occasioned by the seventh vial, is expressed in terms similar to that represented at the opening of the sixth seal: Compare chap. xvi. 18, 19, 20. with chap. vi. 12, 13, 14.

6. The agents under God, to inflict the plagues of the vials, are conscious of their being instruments in his hand to fulfil prophecy; and in this respect they widely differ from the agents employed in the preceding plagues of the trumpets. The northern nations, the Saracens and the Turks, were all ignorant of their being scourges in the hand of God, to punish a degenerate church. It might be said of each as of Sennacherib, “ O Affyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indig-“ nation. I will send him against an hypocri-“ tical

“ tical nation ; and against the people of my
“ wrath will I give him a charge to take the
“ spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them
“ down like the mire of the streets. Howbeit,
“ he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart
“ think so, but it is in his heart to destroy, and
“ cut off nations not a few,” Isa. x. 5.—8.
They were solely actuated by ambition, covetousness or resentment, those selfish passions, so natural to the human heart, though the Almighty over-ruled them, for the purposes of executing his counsel. But the angels that pour out the vials are members of the church: “ They
“ came out of the temple, they are clothed in
“ pure and white linen, having their breasts
“ girded with a golden girdle ;” that is, they
are habited like priests, to intimate that they
have no selfish end in view, by inflicting punishment, but perform a solemn sacrifice to God.
Again, they receive their directions from the ministers of the church : “ And one of the four
“ beasts (living creatures) gave unto the seven
“ angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of
“ God,” Rev. xv. 6, 7. Now these living creatures, first introduced in the fourth chapter, represent the ministers of the church. This is confirmed by what is said of the witnesses, chap. xi. 6. “ These have power over waters to
“ turn them to blood, and to smite the earth
“ with

“ with all plagues, as often as they will.” The witnesses are chiefly the clergy, and their power to smite the earth with plagues, is during the time which follows their mourning prophecy ; that is after their resurrection and ascension, which coincides with the seventh trumpet, and consequently with these vials ¹. Further, the punishment inflicted is procured by the prayers of the church. It is for this reason that the wrath of God is said to be contained in golden vials, alluding to the golden censers under the law, in which sweet incense was offered to God. Thus, the living creatures and elders are represented having golden vials full of odours, chap. v. 8. The incense was obviously typical of prayer ; for in the temple-service, while the incense

(1) The whole verse runs thus : “ These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy, and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.” Their power to shut heaven is in the days of their prophecy ; that is, during the 1260 days in which they wear sackcloth ; and their power to smite the earth with plagues, is in the period that follows after. I consider these words, “ in the days of their prophecy,” as inserted to distinguish betwixt these two distinct periods, for if both the powers mentioned were enjoyed at the same time, it would have been more natural to have placed these words either at the beginning or end of the verse.

cenſe was burning, a ſolemn silence prevailed, and the whole congreſation was employed in prayer, ſo that the time of incenſe was called the hour of prayer. But to put the matter beyond all controverſy, we are told, that the golden vials full of odours are “ the *prayers of saints.*” They are called vials, rather than cenſers, to intimate, that they are transparent as glaſs or crystal, typical of the ſuperior light and glory enjoyed under the Gofpel, beyond that which belonged to the Mofaic diſpenſation ; for the ſame reaſon, a ſea of glaſs is repreſented, chap. xv. 2. alluding to that in Solomon’s tem-ple, which was made of braſs ¹.

7. An attention to the conduct of Providence muſt convince us, that an infinitely wiſe God has diſpoſed events in every period, ſo as to re-ſemble one another, whether thoſe events reſpect the calamities and deliverances of his church, or the riſe and fall of empires. It is the obſervation of the wiſeſt of men, “ The “ thing that has been, it is that which ſhall be, “ and that which is done is that which ſhall be
“ done,

(1) This account of the agents accords with the parallel viſion of the ſtate of the church at the ſame period, but can by no means agree to any time paſt. It further af-fords a presumption, that the period of pouring out theſe vials is at a conſiderable diſtance. Christian piety and zeal are in our days too ſcanty, to furnish agents of the deſcription given above.

“done, and there is nothing new under the “fun.” Nor can we wonder at this similarity of events in every period, when we reflect that the same God carries on the same end, and governs the same subjects ; for, “as face answer-“eth to face in a glafs, so does the heart of “man to a man.” Now an attention to the conduct of Providence would rectify that love of the marvellous, and that expectation of extraordinary interpositions, which have frequently led to error, in the application of prophecy. To the influence of these principles, are owing partly the blindness of the Jews, in applying the prophecies concerning the Messiah, and the extravagance of the primitive fathers, in their conjectures concerning Antichrist ; while Popish writers have availed themselves of the same principles, for the defence of the Papacy against the charge of Antichristianism, by describing Antichrist with such characters as neither have been, nor shall be verified in the world. Directed by these observations, I proceed to illustrate the vials in their order, by offering probable conjectures concerning the events represented by them.

SECTION III.

The First Vial.

“ And I heard a great voice out of the temple, saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth ; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image,” Rev. xvi. 1, 2.

The church being now constituted, and blessed with the divine presence, by the voice of her public teaching, directs to the time and manner of inflicting the last plagues on the adherents of Antichrist. Accordingly, having issued her mandate, “ the first angel went and poured out his vial on the earth.” The first trumpet brought a plague on the earth. The earth there represents the territory, or rather the subjects of Imperial Rome. Here it must signify the persons subject to the spiritual jurisdiction of Papal Rome. Accordingly the persons affected by it, are the men who had the mark of the beast, and worshipped his image. The plague occasioned

occasioned by it, is “a noisome and greivous “ sore.” This unquestionably refers to one of the plagues of Egypt, Exod. ix. 9. But a sore taken spiritually, signifies sin, which is a disease and deformity of the soul. To this purpose the prophet uses these expressions: “ The whole “ head is sick, and the whole heart faint ; from “ the sole of the foot even to the head, there is “ no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises, “ and putrifying sores,” Isa. i. 6. which represent figuratively what he had said plainly, (ver. “ 4.), Ah ! sinful nation, a people laden with ini-“ quity, a seed of evil doers, children that are “ corrupters.” I humbly apprehend, therefore, that the event pointed out in this vial, is, That the impiety and immorality of the Popish superstition shall be convincingly urged on the followers of the beast at the period specified, so that the boldest defenders of that superstition shall not be able to contradict the evidence, but must retire with secret anguish from the field of argument, like the magicians of Egypt, who would not stand before Moses, because of their boils, Exod. ix. 11. I am the more inclined to this opinion, because the witnesses are the agents, by whom all these plagues are inflicted ; and the Reformation furnishes an event similar to the plague of this vial. At that time every tongue was employed, every pen was occupied, in de-
scribing

scribing the deformity of Popery. Nor were those efforts vain, princes and people lent an attentive ear, multitudes were convinced that the charge was just.

S E C T I O N IV.

The Second Vial.

“ AND the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea, and it became as the blood of a dead man ; and every living soul died in the sea,” Rev. xvi. 3.

When the second angel sounded his trumpet, the third part of the sea became blood. It signified then a diminution of the dominion of imperial Rome, for the dominion of a state protects the subjects, as the sea surrounds the land. Now, a diminution of the dominion of Rome was certainly the second step in the progress of the northern nations. In their first attack they plundered the subjects, but afterwards retired with their booty to their own country ; but in their following attacks they took possession of the countries they invaded, erected independent kingdoms, detached whole provinces from the empire, and so diminished the dominion of the city. It appears to me obvious, therefore, that

by

by the second vial there will be a similar diminution of the dominion of Papal Rome. Of this event likewise, we have some view in a parallel event at the Reformation. Whole kingdoms renounced the Papal jurisdiction, and so lessened the Pope's dominion; but it is probable the diminution will be very great, when this vial is poured out; for we are told, that "every living soul which was in the sea died." In the second trumpet, a third part of the sea is mentioned, here the whole sea; the reason may be, that Imperial Rome never extended her conquests, nor claimed a dominion beyond a third part of the earth; but Papal Rome claims a dominion over the whole earth, and has in some respect established it among all nations, by her emissaries.

SECTION V.

The Third Vial.

"AND the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers, and fountains of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters," chap. xvi. 4, 5, 6, 7. The rivers fitly represent all the rulers of a state, taken collectively; for as the rivers derive their origin

origin from the sea, and return their waters to the sea, according to the wise man's observation, " All the rivers run into the sea ; from whence the rivers come, thither they return again," Eccl. i. 7. ; so the rulers derive their authority from the dominion of the state, while they exercise their authority to support that dominion in return. Again, the rivers mentioned in the third trumpet, according to the best interpreters, represent the rulers of Imperial Rome, the fall of the star, or of the imperial form of government, must have chiefly afflicted them with bitterness or sorrow, because that fall implied the loss of their authority and power ; for though the government of Rome subsisted for some time after, it passed from the former rulers into the hands of the Goths. From the resemblance betwixt that trumpet and this vial, I cannot doubt, that the objects of the plague are the rulers of Papal Rome ; and who are these but the superior clergy of the church of Rome ? This is confirmed by the song of praise sung on that occasion : " Thou art righteous O Lord, which art, and wast, and shall be, because thou hast judged thus : For they have shed the blood of saints and of prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink ; for they are worthy." This is said of the Babylonish woman; chap. xvii. 6. " I saw the woman drunk-

" en

“ en with the blood of the saints, and with the
“ blood of the martyrs of Jesus ;” and again,
chap. xviii. 24. “ In her was found the blood
“ of saints and of prophets, and of all that
“ were slain on the earth.” Now, the deed of
the church of Rome, as a collective body, is the
deed of the rulers, and in fact all the murders
of Christ’s faithful followers, for a thousand years
past, have been perpetrated by them, or by
their instigation. Who raised an army of
cross-bearers against the Albigenses and Wal-
denses ? Who put to death John Hus and Jerom
of Prague, notwithstanding the protection of
the civil government ? Who erected the infer-
nal tribunal of the Inquisition ? Who contrived
the several private assassinations and public
massacres that disgrace the annals of Europe
since the Reformation ? The same answer
will suit all these queries. The clergy of the
church of Rome. I cannot doubt, therefore,
that they are the persons who have shed the
blood of saints and of prophets, and to whom a
righteous God, by the pouring out of this vial,
will give blood to drink. This last clause serves
to illustrate the nature of the plague, as the for-
mer points out the objects of it ; it shews that
the deprivation or diminution of power (which
is the spiritual meaning of it) shall be accom-
panied with bloodshed taken in its literal mean-
ing ;

ing ; so that these rulers shall drink plentiful draughts of the cup which they administered to others.

The angel of the waters refers to what is said, chap. xi. 6. “ These have power over waters, “ to turn them to blood,” which confirms the observation formerly made, that these plagues are inflicted by the witnesses, after their resurrection and ascension. Not that I imagine the ministers of the church will personally take up the temporal sword to punish the rulers of Babylon, but they will procure the punishment threatened by their prayers, and shall shew that the time of punishment is come by their doctrine, while, after it is inflicted, they shall demonstrate the justice of God in the dispensations of his providence, as ground of praise and thankfulness to his church. The angel of the altar may represent those who minister at the altar ; his declaring the righteous judgment of God may signify the heinousness of the sins committed by those persons on whom the vial is poured out ; even the ministers of reconciliation announce to them not pardon, but judgment ; and the place where atonement was wont to be made, shall not afford to them any asylum, but procure certain destruction ; yet still in a consistency with God’s law, which ordains, that the murderers shall be taken from his altar.

In

In a word, the princes of the world, and the ministers of the sanctuary, the people and the pastors of the church, shall mutually join in an hymn of praise, when the judgment threatened in this vial shall be executed.

S E C T I O N VI.

The Fourth Vial.

“ And the fourth angel poured out his vial on
“ the sun ; and power was given to him to scorch
“ men with fire. And men were scorched with
“ great heat, and blasphemed the name of
“ God, which hath given power over these
“ plagues ; and they repented not to give him
“ glory,” Rev. xvi. 8, 9.

The sun, moon, and stars, in prophetic language, represent the government of any state, including the supreme and subordinate powers. Darkening the sun, moon, and stars, signifies the extinguishing of the government, destroying either its religious or political existence. Thus, when the sixth seal was opened, “ the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood ; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth,” Chap. vi. 12, 13. Expressions which intimate the dissolution of the Pa-

gan Roman empire, as to its religious existence, an event fulfilled by Constantine. So, when the fourth trumpet sounded, “the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars, so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.” Expressions denoting, according to the best interpreters that the government of Imperial Rome, as to its political existence, should be destroyed. An event fulfilled by Totila. The sun therefore affected by the plague of this vial, must be the supreme power in Papal Rome. Now, the supreme power in Papal Rome, must be the Pope. Some indeed, for obvious reasons, pretend that the supreme power in the present Roman empire belongs, in temporals to the Emperor; in spirituals, to general councils. But to remove the doubts which may arise from this variety of opinions concerning the supreme power in Papal Rome, it will be sufficient to observe that this prophecy invariably represents the ruler of Rome and its territory, as the head of the beast, typifying the Roman empire, even he who exercises the seventh or last form of Roman government within the city. This description cannot apply either to the Emperor of Germany or to councils; but the uniformity of the emblem requires that the head

head of the Roman beast be represented as the sun of the Roman world. The effect of this plague is to scorch men with great heat. By the fourth trumpet the sun was darkened, and its heat was consequently decreased. Here it is increased, yet not for salutary, but pernicious purposes ; if, therefore darkening the sun there, signified extinguishing the supreme power in the government of Imperial Rome, increasing the heat of the sun here, obviously suggests the idea of despotic authority, violently exercised by the supreme power in the government of Papal Rome.

We can suppose many cases in which the exercise of despotic authority would occasion uneasiness to the subjects of the see of Rome, and we might expect that it would prove hurtful in the issue to the Pope's power. A violent exercise of despotic authority met with resistance even in a dark age ; we might expect a resistance still greater in an enlightened age, like the present. But at the period of pouring out this vial, when the Word and Providence of God shall demonstrate the deformity of Popery, and the truth of this prophecy more clearly than they are apprehended in our day, we may infer, from the principles of human nature, that a signal vengeance shall overtake the exercise of despotic authority. Let us suppose, for instance, that a

person of the same character with Gregory VII. shall again fill the Papal chair, and endeavour, by the same measures which that Pontiff pursued, to retrieve the declining state of his affairs. I cannot doubt but those measures would occasion a combination of the powers of Europe, to set the Vatican in flames about his ears. Accordingly that event is represented in the following vial, most probably as the consequence of the scorching heat laid before us in this vial. The subjects of his spiritual jurisdiction, though conscious of the illegality of his proceedings, and aware that they must end in the ruin of the Papal system, shall not renounce their allegiance, but rather blaspheme God, than repent, to give him glory. They rather charge God with unfaithfulness to his promise, than acknowledge themselves in an error; affirm that he has failed to fulfil his word, “On this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her,” rather than acknowledge that they have followed Antichrist, and mistaken the whore of Babylon for the spouse of Christ.

SECTION VII.

The Fifth Vial.

“ And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast ; and his kingdom was full of darkness ; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds,” Rev. xvi. 10, 11.

This vial intimates the destruction of the city of Rome, the throne or seat of the beast. I have already (p. 60, 61.) intimated my reasons for this opinion, as well as for supposing that the event shall take place eighteen years after the fall of the temporal sovereignty annexed to the Papacy. The destruction of Rome “ fills the kingdom of the beast with darkness.” This expression refers to one of the plagues of Egypt; and we are told, that during the time it continued, “ they saw not one another, neither rose any from his place,” Exod. x. 23. I conjecture therefore, that when the event intimated by this vial shall take place, the members of the church of Rome shall be so stupefied, that they can neither concert together, nor make efforts separately for the preservation of the Pope’s authority. At the same

same time, they shall experience insufferable torment, by seeing themselves and their religion in a situation which they neither apprehended nor feared. "They gnawed their tongues for pain;" yet instead of acknowledging the errors of their religion, now made manifest by the dispensations of divine Providence fulfilling prophecy, they shall obstinately adhere to their superstition; so that like Pharaoh and his servants, the more they are plagued, they shall be so much the more hardened, "blaspheming the God of heaven, because of their plagues and their sores, and not repenting of their deeds."

The destruction of Rome is an event of so great importance to the interest of religion, that it is largely described, not only in the 18th chapter of the Apocaylypse, but likewise by the Old Testament prophets, who sometimes have it only in view under the names of Babylon and Idumea, at other times refer to it, when they describe the downfall of ancient Babylon, Nineveh and Tyre. I shall take the advantage

(1) The passages that point to the downfall of Rome, either in a primary or secondary sense, appear from the rules laid down in the First Part, to be the following: Isa. xiii. all, by Rule III.; chap. xxi. 1.—10. Rule II.; chap. xxxiv. all, Rule IV. and. V.; chap. xlvi. 1, 2. and chap. xlvii. all, Rule III. and V.; Jer. xlix. 13.—18.

Rule

tage of their united light to point out the agents, circumstances and consequences of this catastrophe. The agents are in general the several kingdoms of Europe, represented by the horns of the beast. During the period allotted for his reign, they are his agents to persecute Christ's faithful followers, Rev. xvii. 14. But when his reign comes to a close, their love shall be turned to hatred, they shall cut off the sources of wealth which flowed in to him, and to the church over which he presides ; they shall swallow up her rich beneyces, and burn the city of his residence : " And the ten horns which " thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate " the whore, and shall make her desolate and " naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her " with fire. For God hath put in their hearts " to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their " kingdom unto the beast, until the words of " God shall be fulfilled," Rev. xvii. 16, 17. But in regard some of the kings who committed fornication with her, that is, were members of her idolatrous communion, are represented bewailing her destruction, Rev. xviii. 9. we can-
not

Rule V.; chap. 1. 1.—3. ver. 9.—16. ver. 21.—32. ver. 35.—46. chap. li. 1.—14. ver. 25.—64. Rule III. and IV.; Ezek. chap. xxvi. all, chap. xxvii. all, chap. xxviii. 1.—19. Rule IV. and V.; Dan. xi. 40. ; Rule V. ; The whole prophecy of Nahum, Rule III. and IV.

not suppose them to have had any share in it. The words just quoted speak in general terms, putting the whole for a part, meaning some of the kingdoms of Europe; now the particular kingdoms employed by the Almighty as his agents in her destruction, appear to me to be pointed out by the prophet Daniel xi. 40. Having described the character and success of the blasphemous king, in terms which can fully and only apply to the Papacy, he proceeds to shew the manner of his downfall: “ And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him, and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots and with horsemen, and with many ships, and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.” Here the agents that procure his fall, are the kings (or kingdoms) of the south and north; that is, kingdoms so situated with respect to Rome, the residence of the blasphemous king, as the kingdoms of Egypt and Syria, intended by the south and north, in the former part of the chapter, are situated with respect to Judea. I shall not pretend dogmatically to assert which are the kingdoms intended, but I conjecture they may be Naples and France; the former shall make an attack on Rome, but the latter shall lead their forces by sea and land against it, unexpectedly and

and violently like a whirlwind, and shall prove successful, as a flood that overfloweth the land carries every thing along its course, in defiance of any resistance it may meet with.

This circumstance of its being destroyed by a kingdom situated to the north, is repeatedly mentioned in those prophecies which have an aspect to Rome in a secondary sense. Thus, it is said of Babylon, Jer. 1. 3. "Out of the north com-
" eth up a nation against her, which shall
" make her land desolate." Again, ver. 9.
" For lo, I will raise and cause to come up against
" Babylon, an assembly of great nations from
" the north country, and they shall set them-
" selves in array against her, from thence she
" shall be taken." The same circumstance is
repeated, verses 41, 42. In prophecies that have
a double meaning, I think it is probable that
all the circumstances apply to both events, at
any rate, such circumstances as are repeatedly
mentioned. The prophecies describe not only
the agents, but the circumstances likewise that
accompany the destruction of Papal Rome.

They shew the insufficiency of all her resources to preserve her at the time God has allotted for her downfall, though no system of human policy was ever better devised to insure a perpetual duration. She amassed the wealth of the world, which affords the means of negociation,

and forms the sinews of war. The kings and great men of the earth were her avowed protectors. The abilities and learning of the world once centered in her clergy, who, zealous in her defence, taught lies in hypocrisy. The fascinating charms of her idolatry attach millions to her communion, who fancy that her existence is necessary to their salvation. What an immense multitude of angels, saints and images, according to her own faith, are her protectors ! But all shall be of no avail. “ A sword is up-
 “ on the Chaldeans, saith the Lord, and up-
 “ on the inhabitants of Babylon, and upon
 “ her princes, and upon her wife men. A
 “ sword is upon the liars ; and they shall dote⁽¹⁾ :
 “ a sword is upon her mighty men, and they
 “ shall be dismayed. A sword is upon their
 “ horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all
 “ the mingled people that are in the midst of
 “ her ; and they shall become as women : a
 “ sword is upon her treasures ; and they shall
 “ be robbed. A drought is upon her waters ;
 “ and they shall be dried up : for it is the
 “ land of graven images, and they are mad
 “ upon their idols,” Jer. l. 35.—38. “ I will
 “ punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth
 “ out of his mouth, that which he hath swal-
 “ lowed

(1) Such is the character given of her clergy, 1 Tim. iv. 2.

“ lowed up, and the nations shall not flow any
 “ more unto him,” Jer. li. 44. “ Stand now with
 “ thine enchantments, and with the multitude
 “ of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast labour-
 “ ed from thy youth ; if so be thou shalt be
 “ able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail.
 “ Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy
 “ counsels : let now the astrologers, the star-
 “ gazers, the monthly prognosticators stand up,
 “ and save thee from these things that shall
 “ come upon thee : Behold, they shall be as
 “ stubble ; the fire shall devour them ; they
 “ shall not deliver themselves from the power
 “ of the flame,” Isa. xlvi. 12.—14. “ Bel bow-
 “ eth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols are upon
 “ the beasts, and upon the cattle ; your carriages
 “ are heavy laden, they are a burden to the
 “ weary beast. They stoop, they bow down to-
 “ gether, they could not deliver the burden,
 “ but themselves are gone into captivity,”
 Isa. xlvi. 1, 2. Veneration for the prince who
 resides in her, claiming to be the repre-
 sentative of God, will not preserve him from
 death, nor the city of his residence from de-
 struction. “ Thus saith the Lord God, Because
 “ thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I
 “ am a god, I sit in the seat of God¹, in the midst
 “ of

(1) Whoever is accustomed to compare scripture with scripture, must here recognize the character described

" of the seas ; yet thou art a man, and not God,
 " though thou set thine heart as the heart of
 " God : Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel ;
 " there is no secret that they can hide from
 " thee'. With thy wisdom and with thine un-
 " derstanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and
 " hast gotten gold and silver into thy trea-
 " sures : By thy great wisdom, and by thy
 " traffic thou hast increased thy riches, and
 " thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches :
 " Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Because
 " thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God ;
 " Behold therefore, I will bring strangers upon
 " thee, the terrible of the nations : and they
 " shall draw their swords against the beauty of
 " thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy bright-
 " ness. They shall bring thee down to the pit,
 " and thou shall die the deaths of them that
 " are slain in the midst of the seas. Wilt thou
 " yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am
 " God? but thou shalt be a man, and no God, in
 " the

2 Thes. ii. 4. He as God setteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

(1) There is irony and truth in the prophet's expression. Daniel discovered secrets by revelation from God ; but the time has been when the Pope had all the secrets of consequence in Europe, by means of the confessors of princes and statesmen.

“ the hand of him that slayeth thee: Thou
“ shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised, by
“ the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it,
“ saith the Lord God,” Ezek. xxviii. 2.—10.
The sudden and effectual removal of all her
defenders is represented by a striking me-
taphor. “ Thy crowned are as the locusts, and
“ thy captains as the great grasshoppers, which
“ camp in the hedges in the cold day; but
“ when the sun ariseth they flee away, and their
“ place is not known where they are,” Nah. iii.
17. The easy conquest of her outworks is re-
presented by another metaphor: “ All thy
“ strong holds shall be like fig-trees with the first
“ ripe figs: if they be shaken, they shall even
“ fall into the mouth of the eater,” Nah. iii. 12.
Ripe figs drop by a touch, and when they are
first ripe, if they fall into the mouth of the
eater, thy are devoured with eagerness: Never
were strong holds in a worse state of defence
than the fortified cities of Stato della Chiesa
are at present, by the report of all travellers.
How easy then must their conquest be some
time hence, when the delusion occasioned by
Rome’s sorcery is worn off.

It is probable this destruction shall come upon
Rome on a festival night, when the generality
of the inhabitants shall be immersed in drunk-
enness and its attendant vices; for this is re-
peatedly

peatedly asserted of her types, Babylon and Nineveh. “ In their heat I will make their feasts, “ and I will make them drunken, that they “ may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and “ not wake, saith the Lord,” Jer. li. 39. “ And I “ will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, “ her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual “ sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name “ is the Lord of hosts,” ver. 57. “ For while “ they be folded together as thorns, and while “ they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be “ devoured as stubble fully dry,” Nah. i. 10.

The terror of the other inhabitants not stu-
pified by intoxication, is described by the most
lively images: “ Howl ye, for the day of the
“ Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction
“ from the Almighty. Therefore shall all hands
“ be faint, and every man’s heart shall melt: and
“ they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall
“ take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a
“ woman that travaileth; they shall be amazed
“ one at another; their faces shall be as flames,”
Isa. xiii. 6.—8. “ A grievous vision is declared
“ unto me.—Therefore, are my loins filled with
“ pain; pangs have taken hold of me, as the
“ pangs of a woman that travaileth: I was
“ bowed down at the hearing of it; I was dis-
“ mayed at the seeing of it. My heart panted;
“ fearfulness

“ fearfulness affrighted me : the night of my
“ pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me,”
chap. xxi. 2.—4. “ The king of Babylon
“ hath heard the report of them, and his hands
“ waxed feeble ; anguish took hold of him, and
“ pangs as of a woman in travail,” Jer. 1. 43.
“ The mighty men of Babylon have foreborn
“ to fight, they have remained in their holds,
“ their might hath failed, they became as wo-
“ men,” chap. li. 30.

Another circumstance clearly foretold, is the destruction of Rome by fire. Thus, Rev. xvii. 16. “ They shall burn her with fire.” Rev. xviii. 8. “ She shall be utterly burnt with fire : for
“ strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.”
And her admirers are represented as lamenting bitterly when they see “ the smoke of her
“ burning,” ver. 9. 18. In conjunction with the flames spread by the victorious enemy, shall be a subterraneous fire kindled by the breath of the Almighty, as appears from Isa. xxxiv. 9, 10.
“ And the streams thereof shall be turned into
“ pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and
“ the land thereof shall become burning pitch.
“ It shall not be quenched night nor day ; the
“ smoke thereof shall go up for ever.”

It

(1) “ And such an event may appear the more pro-
“ bable, because the adjacent countries are known to be of

“ a

It is probable that a concussion of the earth, accompanying this subterraneous fire, shall dam up the Tiber, so that having no issue to the sea, it shall reduce the ground in the neighbourhood of Rome to a lake or morass, while the hills of Rome shall appear as islands in the midst of the morass, covered with ruinous palaces, and these palaces inhabited by every unclean beast and bird. This I infer from the frequent allusions to the fall of Sodom and Gomorrah, the mention made of the wild beasts of the islands, and such birds as haunt marshy grounds only¹. “And Babylon,

“the

“ a bituminous and sulphurous foil. There have even at
“ Rome been eruptions of subterraneous fire, which have
“ consumed several buildings, so that the fuel seemeth to
“ be prepared, and watch only for the breath of the
“ Lord to kindle it.” Newton’s Diff. on Proph. Vol. iii.
p. 322.

(1) I cannot doubt that the sulphurous shower which destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah was accompanied by a concussion of the earth, which shut up the passage by which the river Jordan formerly issued from the plain, so that the water driven back, formed the lake Asphaltites, or Dead Sea ; and we learn from history, that the river Euphrates being diverted from its channel by Cyrus, in order to enter by it into the city, was never afterwards properly restored, so that the country in the neighbourhood of Babylon,

in

“ the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the
“ Chaldeans excellency, shall be as when God
“ overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall
“ never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt
“ in from generation to generation.—But wild
“ beasts of the desert shall lie there ; and their
“ houses shall be full of doleful creatures ; and
“ owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance
“ there. And the wild beasts of the islands
“ shall cry in their desolate houses, and dra-
“ gons in their pleasant places,” Isa. xiii. 19.—

22. “ But the cormorant and the bittern shall
“ possess it ; the owl also and the raven shall
“ dwell in it : and he shall stretch out upon it
“ the line of confusion, and the stones of emp-
“ tiness.—And thorns shall come up in her pa-
“ laces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses
“ thereof ; and it shall be an habitation of dra-
“ gons, and a court for owls. The wild beasts
“ of the desert shall also meet with the wild
“ beasts of the islands, and the satyr shall
“ cry to his fellow ; the screech owl also shall
“ rest there, and find for herself a place of rest.
“ There shall the great owl make her nest, and
“ lay

in proces of time, became one great morass. Now, the allusions to Sodom and Gomorrah being literally fulfilled in the fate of ancient Babylon, afford at least ground for conjecture, that they shall hold true in the destruction of Papal Rome.

“ lay and hatch, and gather under her shadow ;
“ there shall the vultures also be gathered,
“ every one with her mate. Seek ye out of the
“ book of the Lord, and read ; no one of these
“ shall fail, none shall want her mate : for my
“ mouth it hath commanded, and his Spi-
“ rit it hath gathered them. And he hath cast
“ the lot for them, and his hand hath divided
“ it unto them by line : they shall possess it for
“ ever, from generation to generation shall they
“ dwell therein,” Isa. xxxiv. 11.—17. “ And
“ Edom shall be a desolation : every one that
“ goeth by it, shall be astonished, and shall hiss
“ at all the plagues thereof. As in the over-
“ throw of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the
“ neighbour cities thereof, saith the Lord : no
“ man shall abide there, neither shall a son of
“ man dwell in it,” Jer. xlix. 17, 18. “ There-
“ fore the wild beasts of the desert, with the wild
“ beasts of the islands shall dwell there, and the
“ owls shall dwell therein : and it shall no more
“ be inhabited for ever ; neither shall it be
“ dwelt in from generation to generation. As
“ God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and
“ the neighbour cities thereof, saith the Lord :
“ so shall no man abide there, neither shall any
“ son of man dwell therein,” Jer. l. 39, 40.
“ And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling
“ place for dragons, an astonishment and an
“ hissing,

“ hissing, without an inhabitant,” chap. li. 37.
“ I saw another angel come down from heaven,
“ having great power; and the earth was light-
“ ened with his glory. And he cried mightily
“ with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great
“ is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habita-
“ tion of devils, and the hold of every foul spi-
“ rit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful
“ bird,” Rev. xviii. 1, 2.¹

All these expressions imply a total and perpetual, not a partial and temporary dissolution. But to remove all dubiety, the Apostle John says, “ A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found

(1) “ But if this fall of Babylon was effected by Totila king of the Ostrogoths, as Grotius affirms, or by Alaric, king of the Visigoths, as the Bishop of Meaux contends, how can Rome be said ever since to have been the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird, unless they will allow the Popes and Cardinals to merit these appellations?” Newton’s Diff. on Prop. vol. iii. p. 312.

“ found any more in thee ; and the sound of a
 “ millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee.
 “ And the light of a candle shall shine no more
 “ at all in thee ; and the voice of the bride-
 “ groom, and of the birde, shall be heard no
 “ more at all in thee,” Rev. xviii. 21.—23.¹

The reasons of this signal catastrophe appears from the Old Testament prophets, and from the Apocalypse, to be pride and luxury. “ And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever ; so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it. Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else besides me ; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children. But these two things

(1) Pastorini, a late Catholic writer, in his interpretation of the Apocalypse, applies these verses to Constanti-nople ; while he allows that Babylon, in the whole of the chapter preceding them, signifies Rome. As this opinion rests on his bare assertion, and is obviously contrary to the connection of the passage, it deserves not a serious reflection ; but the assertion clearly shews, that he considered the words as inapplicable to any judgment already inflicted on Rome ; and indeed, to suppose them accomplished, while Rome exists and flourishes after, is to trifle with the expressions of scripture, and to play on the human understanding.

“ things shall come to thee in a moment in one
“ day ; the loss of children and widowhood,”
Isa. xlvii. 7, 8, 9. “ How much she hath glo-
“ rified herself, and lived deliciously, so much
“ torment and sorrow give her : for the faith in
“ her heart, I fit a queen, and am no widow,
“ and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her
“ plagues come in one day, death, and mourn-
“ ing, and famine,” Rev. xviii. 7, 8. “ And
“ the fruits that thy soul lusteth after are de-
“ parted from thee, and all things which were
“ dainty and goodly, are departed from thee,
“ and thou shalt find them no more at all,”
ver. 14.

Another reason is covetousness. “ O thou
“ that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in
“ treasures, thine end is come, and the mea-
“ sure of thy covetousness,” Jer. li. 13. “ Alas,
“ alas, that great city, wherein were made rich
“ all that had ships in the sea, by reason of her
“ costliness : for in one hour is she made deso-
“ late,” Rev. xviii. 19. She is charged with
idolatry likewise. “ It is the land of graven
“ images, and they are mad upon their idols,”
Jer. l. 38. “ Babylon hath been a golden cup
“ in the Lord’s hand, that made all the earth
“ drunken : the nations have drunken of her
“ wine ; therefore the nations are mad,” chap.
li. 7. “ Come hither, I will shew unto thee
“ the

“ the judgment of the great whore, that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.—“ And the woman was arrayed in purple,—having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. “ And upon her forehead was a name written; “ MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH,” Rev. xvii. 1, 2, 4, 5. “ Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen,—for all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her,” chap. xviii. 2, 3.

She is judged for persecution of the people of God. “ I was wroth with my people; I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thine hand: thou didst shew them no mercy; upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke,” Isa. xlvii. 6. “ Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth; and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks; and will make thee a burnt mountain,” Jer. li. 25. “ As Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall; so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all

“ the

“ the earth,” verse 49. “ And I saw the wo-
“ man drunken with the blood of the saints,
“ and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus,”
Rev. xvii. 6. “ And in her was found the
“ blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all
“ that were slain upon the earth,” ch. xviii. 24.

Let us now see the consequences of this catastrophe. When Rome shall thus be destroyed by the just judgment of God, the several parties then on earth shall be variously affected, according to their different sentiments. Persons attached to her superstition, shall experience anguish similar to the torment of the damned, a torment arising from a strong conviction of the truth, while the will and affections resist it. This sentiment is conveyed by these expressions, “ They gnawed their tongues for pain,” Rev. xvi. 10. And notwithstanding the gradual decline of the power and influence of the church of Rome, which precedes this destruction, it would appear that severals of all ranks continue firmly attached to her at the time the event takes place; for these are represented as bitterly lamenting over her fall: particularly some of the kings of Europe, who found her doctrine favourable to the gratification of their passions, and the exercise of that despotic authority with which they reigned, though they cannot give her effectual aid, shall bitterly lament

ment her fall. “ And the kings of the earth, “ who have committed fornication, and lived “ deliciously with her, shall bewail her and “ lament for her, when they shall see the smoke “ of her burning, standing afar off, for the fear “ of her torment, saying, Alas, alas ! that great “ city Babylon, that mighty city ; for in one “ hour is thy judgment come !” Rev. xviii. 9, 10.

Her clergy, who had for a long time amassed the wealth of the world, by the sale of spirituals, and purchased all the luxurious wares of the earth “ for bills drawn on heaven and hell, “ never to be accepted,” finding the ruin of their trade involved in her fall, shall sincerely regret it. “ And the merchants of the earth “ shall weep and mourn over her, for no man “ buyeth their merchandise any more.—The “ merchants of these things, which were made “ rich by her, shall stand afar off, for the fear of her

(1) Philip II. of Spain said, that every king who was not of the Catholic religion must be a fool, because he could purchase, for a little money, every pleasure here and hereafter. “ The pomp of worship which that religion (Popery) carefully supports, is agreeable to the taste of magnificence which prevails in courts, and forms a species of devotion, which, while it flatters the pampered senses, gives little perplexity to the indolent understandings of the great.” Hume’s Hist. of Eng.

“ her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying,
“ Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in
“ fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and deck-
“ ed with gold and precious stones, and pearls ;
“ for in one hour so great riches is come to
“ nought.” Rev. xviii. 11, 15, 16, 17.

Her inferior clergy and missionaries, who propagated her doctrines with zeal, as shipmasters carry the commodities of one country to another, knowing that their gain and manner of subsistence is ruined by her fall, shall bitterly lament it. “ And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried, when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, “ What city is like unto this great city ? And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping, and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea, by reason of her costliness ; for in one hour is she made desolate ! ” Rev. xviii. 17, 18, 19.

On the other hand, the true church of Christ shall rejoice, seeing in this signal judgment the perfections of God manifested, his word fulfilled, and his church delivered from the most grievous tyranny she had ever groaned under. She is expressly commanded to rejoice : “ Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy

“ postles and prophets, for God hath avenged
“ you on her,” Rev. xviii. 20. She readily
obeys the divine mandate : “ After these things
“ I heard a great voice of much people in hea-
“ ven, saying, Alleluia : Salvation, and glory,
“ and honour, and power, unto the Lord our
“ God : for true and righteous are his judg-
“ ments : for he hath judged the great whore,
“ which did corrupt the earth with her forni-
“ cation, and hath avenged the blood of his ser-
“ vants at her hand. And again they said, Al-
“ leluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and
“ ever. And the four and twenty elders, and
“ the four beasts, fell down and worshipped
“ God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen ;
“ Alleluia,” Rev. xix. 1, 2, 3, 4.

This event shall prove the occasion, not only of joy, but likewise of increase to the church of Christ. Many chained to the superstitions of Popery by strong prejudices, until that period, shall then be set free, being convinced by the word and providence of God. They shall hear with efficacy, “ A voice from heaven, saying, “ Come out of her, my people, that ye be not
“ partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not
“ of her plagues,” Rev. xviii. 4. The gospel, which had a free course from the period that the seventh trumpet sounded, shall now be preached with increasing zeal, and additional success

success. " And there followed another angel,
" saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great
" city, because she made all nations drink of
" the wine of the wrath of her fornication ; "
Rev. xiv. 8.

C H A P-

(1) Mede, Newton, and some others, suppose the voice of this angel to have been fulfilled by the Albigenses and Waldenses ; but the arguments already advanced, p. 186. to refute their opinion respecting the preceding angel, will apply here. The voice of this angel is posterior to the former ; and therefore, after the sounding of the seventh trumpet. Besides the repetition of this voice, chap. xviii. 2. clearly fixes the period to the fifth vial, of which that chapter is an enlarged explication.

C H A P T E R IV.

Of the Events that take place from the Destruction of Rome to the Battle of Armageddon, or Seventh Vial.

S E C T I O N I.

The Papal Power is erected in Judea.

IN order to trace the progress of events farther, a question must be resolved, which will readily occur here. Seeing Rome is destroyed, and rendered uninhabitable by the fifth vial, and the beast and false prophet are destroyed only by the seventh vial, Where shall the residence of the beast be during the period that elapses betwixt the fifth and seventh vials?

I answer, In the land of Judea, in the city of Jerusalem. I embrace this opinion, not from any preconceived prejudice, but upon the testimony of the truth. It never once entered into my mind, until a careful perusal of the prophecies first suggested, and then confirmed

firmed it with convincing evidence. Because this circumstance is closely interwoven with the events that follow after, and that a knowledge of it is necessary to understand their connection, I shall briefly state the evidence on which it rests.

I. It appears to me to be asserted in the most explicit manner, by the prophet Daniel, chap. xi. 41. and 45. “ He shall enter also into the glorious land.—And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace betwixt the seas in the glorious holy mountain.” The prophet having shewn in the 40th verse a successful attack made on the blasphemous king, by his European neighbours, (as I have already explained it), pursues the sequel of his story ; he shews, that in consequence of this attack, being forcibly expelled from his former residence, he (the blasphemous king) should enter the glorious land, or land of Judea, (so termed, ver. 16. of this chapter, and chap. viii. 9.) and that his entrance should not be for a transient visit, but for a stated residence in the city of Jerusalem, situated betwixt the dead sea to the east, and the Mediterranean to the west ; “ He shall plant the tabernacles of his palace betwixt the seas in the glorious holy mountain.” I may appeal to every unprejudiced person, whether this be not

the

the most obvious, natural, and unconstrained meaning of the passage. But in regard a person of so great authority in interpreting scripture prophecy, as Joseph Mede, gives a different turn to this passage, it will be necessary to examine his opinion. He supposes the pronoun *he*, in the beginning of verse 41st, and downward, to refer to the king of the north, and not to the blasphemous king, which alters wholly the sense of the passage. It is true, that the king of the north is the person last spoken of in the preceding verse ; but it is likewise true, that the transition from one person to another in the prophecies is very sudden, and in no passage of the prophecies more so than in this chapter ; so that the strict rules of grammar, which require the pronoun to refer to the person last spoken of, in a discourse like the prophet's, is but a slender foundation to build on, without other corroborating circumstances. For instance, it is said, ver. 6. “ The king’s daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement : but he shall not retain the power of the arm ; neither shall he stand, nor his arm.” Here the pronoun *he*, ought in strict propriety to refer to the king of the north, as the person last spoken of ; but the following clause corrects that application, and shews that the king of the south is intended.

ed. " But she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her." She was daughter to the king of the south, he was the person that begat her, and who was given up, consequently the person whose arm did not stand.

As the foundation on which Mede builds his interpretation is untenable, so an observation will readily occur to the common sense of the attentive reader, which fixes the application of the passage to the blasphemous king. The design of the prophet, in this passage is to give a history of the blasphemous king. The king of the north is introduced merely on account of his making war with him ; and that he overflowed the territories of the blasphemous king, does not imply that he destroyed his existence, as appears from the frequent use of the term in the preceding part of the chapter. Are we to suppose, then, that the prophet would stop short in the history of the blasphemous king, of which he professedly treats, before he had brought it to a conclusion, and carry on that of the king of the north, introduced accidentally ? Put the case, that a person professedly writes the History of England ; that he introduces France as at war with England ; that he stops short in the History of England, and carries on that of France ; would not the historian be charged with

with great impropriety? But with that impropriety the spirit of prophecy is chargeable, by Mede's interpretation. I cannot therefore hesitate in rejecting it.

I am aware that another objection may be made to the interpretation I have now given; namely, "That the glorious holy mountain" may be taken, in a figurative sense, to signify the church; so we understand the Apostle, when he says of the man of sin, That he "sitteth in "the temple of God," 2 Thess. ii. 4. In answer, I would observe, That there are several circumstances in the narrative, which cannot accord with a figurative interpretation. As, *first*, The time when he took up his residence in the holy mountain, it is said to be "at the time "of the end," about the close of his reign; whereas he had his residence in the church from the beginning of it.—*Secondly*, The manner of his coming to reside there, in consequence of a forcible expulsion from his former place of residence; whereas he attained his empire in the church gradually and imperceptibly.—*Thirdly*, The glorious land, in a figurative sense, signifies Heaven, Heb. xi.; to which the blasphemous king cannot be supposed to have access. It must be taken in a literal sense; so ought also the glorious holy mountain, when conjoined with the glorious land, in the same narrative.—

Fourthly,

Fourthly, The glorious holy mountain is said to be “ between the seas,” which admits of an obvious meaning, if taken literally; but appears to me absolutely inexplicable, if taken figuratively. I conclude, therefore, that the blasphemous king is the person whom the prophet has in view; that his entering the glorious land, and placing the tabernacles of his palace in the holy mountain, are expressions to be taken literally; which certainly imply his residence in the land of Judea, in the city of Jerusalem.

The prophet Jeremiah had given a similar account before Daniel. The account of the former, when viewed by itself, is obscure, but when illustrated by the latter, we discover the same circumstances, related of the same person, and at the same time. “ Behold, he shall “ come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan, against the habitation of the strong : “ but I will suddenly make him run away from “ her ; and who is a chosen man that I may “ appoint over her ? for who is like me ? and “ who will appoint me the time ? and who is “ that shepherd that will stand before me ? ” Jer. xlix. 19. The person here spoken of is the king of Edom, that is of spiritual Babylon, (see page 46.), as a lion lodging in the thickets, on the banks of Jordan, is forcibly driven from his habitation, by the overflowing of the river,

so he shall be forcibly expelled from his first residence, by the king of the north coming against him as an overflowing flood. In consequence of this expulsion, he shall come up “against the “ habitation of the strong ;” a term more applicable to the city of Jerusalem, than any other place upon earth, being strongly fortified by nature and art, the residence formerly of heroes, and the city where the Almighty “ placed his “ name,” and in a peculiar manner dwelt ; whereas he flatters himself with a lasting residence in that city. God informs the prophet, “ I will suddenly make him run away from “ her,” intimating, that God himself would interpose, and make his residence there short, when compared with the time he continued in his former habitation. To establish the truth of this declaration, he intimates, that he hath ordained the instruments, and appointed the time, and that no human power may contend with his.

The time when the king of Edom comes up against the habitation of the strong, is after the place of his former residence is reduced to a state similar to that of Sodom and Gomorrah, as we learn from the preceding verse, “ As in the over-“ throw of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the “ neighbouring cities thereof, saith the Lord : no

“ man

“ man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it.”

The same expressions, including the same circumstances, are repeated, chap, 1. 40. 44. and applied to the king of Babylon, to intimate that the kings of Edom and Babylon, literally taken, are not intended, but a person in whom the characters of both, namely, cruelty and idolatry, unite.

II. Another ground of this opinion, is the connexion betwixt the sixth and seventh vials. The sixth vial represents the conversion of the Jews, as we have already seen, p. 73. The converted Jews, are the persons who go down to Armageddon at the seventh vial, and by whom the beast and false prophet are finally destroyed, Rev. xiv. 20. Yea, upon their conversion, he and his followers are seized with a horrible dread, apprehending such an event. Now, upon the supposition of his residence in Europe, the reason of this apprehension does not appear, nor is it probable either that they would meditate an expedition against him, or that he, in the declining state of his own affairs, should form a crusade against them. But his residence in Judea clears up these things, which appear obscure in the narrative. It shews the parties brought into contact, by the providence of God, previous

previous to the decisive victory. The conversion of the Jews implies their restoration to the promised land ; and their restoration implies the destruction of the possessors of that land. Hence the horrible consternation with which the beast and his followers are seized, upon their conversion ; and hence the extraordinary preparation for war, by which earth and hell are moved for their defence, Rev. xvi. 13, 14.

III. The state of the world, (represented in the prophecies), at the period the beast takes up his residence in Judea, shews the high probability of such an event, though it had not been so clearly revealed.

The Ottoman empire was dissolved immediately before the seventh trumpet sounded, about eighteen years before the destruction of Rome. The unsettled state of affairs, which naturally follows the dissolution of a great empire, affords an opportunity to adventurous spirits, to seize upon the provinces. We have a striking example of this in the rapid division of power and territory among the successors of Alexander the Great, when the unity of his empire was dissolved.

There is at present, and in all probability there will be, at the period specified in the prophecy, a party of the Latin church resident in Judea. They are of all the other sects that inhabit

habit Jerusalem, the most powerful. It is probable, that when they hear of the destruction of Rome, they will elect one of their own number to be head of the Latin church, well knowing how much the head of their church was indebted all along to the blind veneration which the inhabitants of the Roman empire had for the city of his residence ; knowing likewise, that Jerusalem is the only place on earth which, in respect to the veneration due to it, may vie with Rome ; being acknowledged by Christians of all parties to be the mother-church. Now, if such a head is elected, and acknowledged by the Catholic party, the prophetic description is fully vindicated, though the Pope and the College of Cardinals were exterminated in the destruction of Rome.

IV. The circumstances which accompany the conversion of the Jews, and the arguments which prove the place of Armageddon to be Judea, put the residence of the beast at that time in Judea, beyond a doubt. But to prevent a repetition, I shall refer the illustration of this argument to the detail of these circumstances, in their proper place and order.

When the Papal sovereignty is erected in Judea, its influence shall spread rapidly and extensively in the benighted regions of Asia. We might

might expect that a power, artful and ambitious, would procure numerous followers among a people for ages involved in Mahometan delusion, Pagan idolatry, or gross superstition, under the name of Christian; accustomed to submit to the galling Turkish yoke, ignorant of the sciences, strangers to civil and religious liberty. Upon the same principles that the Pope extended his influence in Europe, in the tenth century, we may infer that he will extend it in Asia in the twenty first century.

Accordingly the Prophet Daniel lays before us the subjects of his spiritual jurisdiction. "He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown; But (and) these shall (not) escape out of his hand, even Edom and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries ; and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt : And the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps," Dan. xi. 41, 42, 43. The word translated overthrown, should be rendered stumble ; a scripture expression, which denotes rejecting the truth, through delusion. So the Prophet Isaiah says of the Jews, in our Saviour's time, " Many shall stumble," Isa. viii. 15. The expression

expression intimates that the countries mentioned, should not be conquered by force of arms, but should submit to the blasphemous king, by rejecting the truth, through his delusion. I am of opinion that the particle *not*, has been dropt out of the text ; and that it should be, “These shall *not* escape out of his hand, “ even Edom and Moab, and chief of the “ children of Ammon.” For the turn of the expression is the same with that in the following clause : “ And Egypt shall not escape.” The design of the prophet appears to be, to represent such as submitted to him, not such as rejected him. But above all, I find in other passages the inhabitants of these countries represented as his chief supporters. “ He shall have “ power over all the treasures of Egypt.” It is not said that he had power over the Egyptians, but over their treasures. Just as the Pope, in the dark ages, conveyed the wealth of Christendom to the see of Rome, without claiming a temporal sovereignty over those people whom he gulled out of their money.

“ The Libyans shall be at his steps.” Here again the expressions intimate a voluntary submission. They follow him as their guide, yielding a submission very different from that which the despotic sovereigns of Asia and Africa require of their subjects. We have in this passage, therefore,

an account of the subjects of his spiritual jurisdiction ; and these are the inhabitants of Palestine, where he resides. Those of the neighbouring countries, once possessed by the Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites, together with the Egyptians, Cushites, (either the Ethiopians or Arabians), and Libyans. It is probable, likewise, that the whole Greek church shall submit to him as their spiritual head. The Greek church is equally superstitious and idolatrous with the Latin church. When superstition and idolatry are on the decline, through the influence of the gospel, these two bodies may be led by a similarity of sentiment, to unite in their adversity, though they quarrelled in their prosperity. Again, the real ground of the quarrel seems to have been pride. The Greek church had four patriarchal seats within her own territories, she considered each of them equally venerable with Rome ; at any rate, her pride would not permit her to renounce the respect due to them, so far as to acknowledge Rome the chief. The dispute concerning the addition of the word *filioque* to the creed, was rather the ostensible, than the real reason of their separation. When, therefore, the real reason is removed, by the residence of the head of the church in Jerusalem, it is likely that they will submit to his authority. Farther, the design which

God

God had in view, by permitting so extraordinary a power as that of the Pope to arise in the western church, may require that the same power should arise likewise in the eastern church. The design seems to be that of a wise physician, who, finding peccant humours in the body, brings on a suppuration to collect and dislodge them, that the health may be restored. The peccant humours of professing Christians appeared early, and increased gradually. At length they formed the Papal hierarchy, around which as a centre, the superstitious and sinful tenets and practices, mingled with Christianity by the cunning of Satan, and the infirmity of man, are collected ; forming a huge imposthume on the body of the church, exceedingly deformed to look at ; but, when ripe, it shall be lanced ; and the humours thus dislodged ; the health of the spiritual constitution shall be restored. But in regard the Greek church did not collect round this centre, it appears to be the progress of the same design, to permit the same power to arise in Judea, for the express purpose of collecting the corrupted Greek church round him, as their centre ; that, when this second suppuration is lanced by the sword of the Jews, the church may be purified, and prepared for her millennial state.

These conjectures seem to be confirmed by the express testimony of Zechariah, chap. ix. 13. “ When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, “ O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece.” The prophet states the parties in the battle of Armageddon. On the one hand are the Jews then converted, on the other the sons of Greece, as the chief supporters of the beast. Now, the only community bearing the name of Greeks, since the fall of the Greek empire, is the Greek church. It is probable, therefore, they shall constitute the great part of his subjects before the battle. The Papal power, thus erected in Judea, shall continue to prosper, receiving the submission of ignorant and deluded nations, until the Jews are converted ; an event so fatal to his authority, that the spirit of prophecy represents it as the sixth vial of God’s wrath, poured out on the beast and his kingdom. But, before I proceed to show the effect of it on his dominion, I shall first delineate from the prophecies the circumstances that precede their conversion, and then the manner in which it is effected.

SECTION H.

A virulent Persecution of the Jews is carried on by the Papal Power, in a great Part of Asia and Africa.

ONE circumstance clearly revealed, is, that the Jews shall be in very great distress immediately before their conversion. To this purpose are the expressions of Jeremiah, chap. xxx. 4.—9, 10. “And these are the words that the “ Lord spake concerning Israel, and concerning “ Judah. For thus saith the Lord, We have “ heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not “ of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a “ man doth travail with child? Wherefore do “ I see every man with his hands on his loins, “ as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned “ into paleness? Alas! for that day is great, “ so that none is like it; it is even the time of “ Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of “ it. For, it shall come to pass in that day, saith “ the Lord of hosts, that I will break his yoke “ from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, “ and strangers shall no more serve themselves “ of him: But they shall serve the Lord their “ God, and David their king, whom I will “ raise up unto them.” Of this trouble, paint-
ed

ed in such lively colours, it is said, “That Ja-
“ cob shall be saved out of it ;” that is, it shall
end in deliverance. And when shall that be ?
“ In that day,—when strangers shall not more
“ serve them selves of him ;” that is, at the
close of their long dispersion. But being thus
saved, “ They shall serve the Lord their God,
“ and David their king ;” that is, they shall
submit to the Messiah. These circumstances are
applicable to the period immediately preceding
their conversion, and to that only.

This circumstance is confirmed by the prophet Ezekiel, chap. vii. 16.—18. “ But they
“ that escape of them, shall escape, and shall be
“ on the mountains like doves of the vallies all
“ of them mourning, every one for his iniquity.
“ All hands shall be feeble, and all knees shall
“ be weak as water. They shall also gird them-
“ selves with sackcloth, and horror shall cover
“ them ; and shame shall be upon all faces, and
“ baldness upon all their heads.” From the be-
ginning of the chapter, the prophet describes
the desolation of the land of promise, by the Ro-
man dispersion. But in order to afford some
consolation to the faithful, he observes, verse 16.
That a “ remnant should escape ;” that is, af-
ter all the calamities of their dispersion, who
should be brought to a sense of their sin, and be
made to mourn over it : He then describes that
distress

distress which, in the course of providence, would be the mean of bringing them to a sense of sin. So that it immediately precedes their conversion.

The Prophet Daniel predicts the same trouble, with this addition, That it should be the greatest the nation had ever experienced, chap. xii. 1. "And at that time shall Michael stand up, " the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time: And at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."

Here are three circumstances which fix the period of this trouble to that immediately preceding their conversion. The expression, "at that time," in the beginning of the verse, connects it with the end of the reign of the blasphemous king, mentioned in the close of the preceding chapter. It is likewise the time at which Michael shall stand up for the nation of the prophet. I consider Michael as a disguised name for the Messiah. If he had called him Messiah here, it would confound this period with that of his first appearance, formerly mentioned in the prophecy of the seventy weeks, chap. ix. 24. This "standing up for them," intimates the manifestation of him to Israel,—at the same time

time the people “ shall be delivered ;” so it must be the close of their long calamitous dispersion

The nature of this distress is as clearly revealed as its existence. It appears to proceed from the sword and famine. So the Prophet Isaiah expressly asserts, “ These two things are “ come unto thee ; who shall be sorry for thee ? “ Desolation and destruction, and the famine “ and the sword : By whom shall I comfort “ thee ? ” Chap. li. 19. As it is sometimes an easier matter to rear a new building, than to clear the foundation of old rubbish, so it is easier to establish the true sense of scripture, than to remove the errors occasioned by false interpretation. All the commentators of name upon Isaiah, apply this passage to the return from Babylon. But a little attention to the passage itself must convince the unprejudiced, that unless we shall permit the historian flatly to contradict the prophet, no one iota of this passage can apply to that period. At the period here mentioned, “ There is none to guide her (Jerusalem, “ or the Jewish nation,) among all the sons “ whom she hath brought forth ; neither is there “ any that taketh her by the hand, of all the “ sons that she hath brought up,” verse 18. Was there none of the nation either able or willing to support her at the return from Babylon ?

There

There were Zerubabel and Shealtiel, Ezra and Nehemiah, Joshua the high-priest, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, the prophets; all of them as willing to take the hand of their nation, as they were able to guide her. “ Thy sons have fainted, they lie at the head of all the streets as a wild bull in a net: They are full of the fury of the Lord, the rebuke of thy God;” verse 20. Did any such distress as this, together with the sword and famine mentioned in the foregoing verse, precede the return from Babylon? On the contrary, many were so well satisfied with the land of their captivity, that they remained there, notwithstanding the proclamation of Cyrus. The fact is, that they only returned, “ whose spirit God had raised to go up to build the House of the Lord;” Ezra i. 5. persons whom God excited to forego their temporal interests in Babylon, for their spiritual privileges in Jerusalem. “ Thus saith the Lord —Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again;” Isa. li. 22. This intimates a deliverance from such distress as never should be renewed, therefore cannot apply to the Babylonish captivity; for it has been renewed by the Roman dispersion, and rendered much more calamitous. But all the prophets assert, that when converted,

converted, and restored to their land in the latter days, they shall never be again disinherited. These circumstances, therefore, fix the distress here mentioned to the period immediately preceding their conversion.

That famine is a chief ingredient in this distress, is hinted by the Prophet Ezekiel, in the passage already quoted, chap. vii. 19. “ They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed : Their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord : They shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels ; because it is the stumbling-block of their iniquity.” The word translated *streets*, signifies *abroad*, *in the open fields* ; that translated *removed*, signifies something removed, as unclean ; it is the word rendered *filthiness*, 2 Chron. xxix. 5. ; the particle rendered *because*, sometimes signifies *although*. The stumbling-block of their iniquity, means the outward object, which gratifies the predominant passion ; it is therefore joined to heart-idols, Ezekiel xiv.

4. The whole verse might be rendered thus, “ They shall cast away their silver in the open fields, and their gold they shall separate from them as vile, (their gold and their silver shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord ; these shall not satisfy “ their

“ their hunger, nor fill their bowels); although it was the great object of desire with them, “ to gratify their covetousness.” The circumstances mentioned here are exceedingly descriptive of a terrible famine. Covetous men cast away their gold as vile, because it cannot fill their bowels.

Are we solicitous to know the agents by whom this distress is brought upon the Jews, the prophecies discover these likewise. The chief agent appears to be the blasphemous king now residing in Jerusalem. Their distress is owing to a virulent persecution of their nation, carried on by him throughout the extent of his jurisdiction, which, as we have already seen, is considerable. That he carries on a persecution against some people who incurred his indignation, is obvious, from the testimony of Daniel, chap. xi. 44. “ But tidings out of the “ east and out of the north shall trouble him : “ therefore he shall go forth with great “ fury to destroy, and utterly to make away “ many.” That the persecution shall be very virulent, is implied in the expressions. The word rendered, “ utterly to make away,” signifies to devote to death with a curse : it is the same used in that sentence of the law, Leviticus, chap. xxvii. 28, 29. “ Nevertheless every devoted “ thing, whether of man or beast, it shall not

“ be redeemed, it shall surely be put to death.” It implies therefore, that he went forth with a purpose of exterminating the people against whom his fury was directed. But why should we suppose that people to be the Jews ? In two verses after, the prophet mentions the extraordinary trouble of their nation, and that it should take place about the same time, which affords a presumption, that their trouble was the consequence of his fury.

But the prophet Ezekiel put this circumstance beyond a doubt, chap. xxxv. 5. where God addresses Edom, and after denouncing severe judgments, intimates the reason thus ; “ Because “ thou hast had a perpetual hatred, and hast shed “ the blood of the children of Israel by the force “ of the sword, in the time of their calamity, in “ the time that their iniquity had an end.” The person here addressed is Edom, meaning the king of spiritual Babylon, for the reasons already mentioned ; to which we may add, that he is literally king of Edom, at the period mentioned in the prophecy, by having at least a spiritual jurisdiction over the country once possessed by Edom. He is charged with a perpetual hatred. The Pope, from the beginning, bore a hatred to the spiritual Israel of God. When possessed of the country of Edom, he shall inherit the old hatred of Edom against his brother

Jacob,

Jacob, and persecute the literal Israel, “shedding their blood by the force of the sword.” What aggravates his crime is, the time in which he carries on this persecution. It is, “the time of their calamity ;” that is, of their “great trouble, such as never was since they were a nation ;” “in the time that their iniquity had an end ;” that is, when God was about to be reconciled with them, after they had been excluded from his favour for two thousand years before ; in a word, at the end of their great dispersion. This circumstance of the time, prevents the application of this passage to any persecution carried on by ancient Edom, and indeed fixes the period to that immediately preceding their conversion. This is confirmed by two parallel views of the same time, given likewise in this passage : “I will make myself known amongst them, when I have judged thee,” ver. 11. Here is a promise, that God will manifest himself to Israel, by their conversion and restoration, at the time he will execute judgment on Edom, immediately after the persecution. His persecution therefore coincides with the time of their conversion. “Thus saith the Lord God, When the whole earth rejoiceth, I will make thee desolate,” ver. 14. Here the time of punishing Edom is represented as a period of universal joy throughout the earth.

It must therefore signify the Millennium, and Edom can be no other than the “ beast and false prophet, who were cast into the lake of fire,” immediately before it commenced, Rev. xix. 20. The whole prophecy of Obadiah has an aspect to this persecution, more than to any thing done by the ancient Edomites, as appears from the concluding verses: “ For the day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee; thy reward shall return upon thine own head. For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually; yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been,” ver. 15, 16. This is a description of the battle of Armageddon, which follows after the conversion of the Jews, and of the persecution which preceded it, mentioned in the former part of the chapter. As the heathen in general, and Edom in particular, administered the cup of God’s anger to Israel, so they shall drink of the same cup in this decisive battle. The expressions are similar to those of Isaiah on the same subject. “ I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling,—but I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee,” chap. li. 22, 23. “ But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness;

“ holiness ; and the house of Jacob shall possess
“ their possessions,” Obad. ver. 17. The Jews pos-
sess their land in consequence of the battle of Ar-
mageddon ; they bring along with them holiness,
a spirit different from that which their fathers
had on their return from Babylon. “ And the
“ house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house
“ of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for
“ stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and
“ devour them ; and there shall not be any re-
“ maining of the house of Esau : for the Lord
“ hath spoken it,” ver. 18. The Jews are here
represented as parties on one side in the battle
of Armageddon, as the house of Esau is on the
other side ; so in the Apocalypse, the Jews are
the followers of him who sat on the white horse,
the beast and his followers their opponents, Rev.
xix. The issue is the same in both, the ene-
mies of the Jews are finally destroyed. “ And
“ they of the south shall possess the mount of
“ Esau ; and they of the plain the Philistines :
“ and they shall possess the fields of Ephraim,
“ and the fields of Samaria ; and Benjamin shall
“ possess Gilead. And the captivity of this host
“ of the children of Israel shall possess that of
“ the Canaanites, even unto Zarephath ; and
“ the captivity of Jerusalem, which is in Se-
“ pharad, shall possess the cities of the south,”
Obad. ver. 19, 20. When they take possession of
their

their land at the period specified in the prophecy, their boundaries shall extend much farther than they did in the most flourishing days of their nation under Solomon ; and they are said to possess the fields of Samaria ; but after the return from Babylon the Cutheans possessed Samaria, and in other respects their boundaries were not so extensive as formerly. “ And savious shall come up upon mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau ; and the kingdom shall be the Lord’s,” ver. 21. These last expressions can apply only to the Millennium, when “ the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ.” And the Millennium takes place after the battle of Armageddon, where “ the beast and false prophet are taken.”

All these circumstances prove, that the persecution described in the former part of the chapter is that which immediately precedes the conversion of the Jews, the same into which we are now enquiring ; so that we have in this passage another proof, that the prince of Edom, or the blasphemous king, is the chief agent in the persecution, as well as a further detail of the enormities committed by him. “ For thy violence against thy brother Jacob, shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever. In the day that thou stoodest on the other side,

“ in

“ in the day that strangers carried away captive his forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem¹, even thou wast as one of them. But thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother, in the day that he became a stranger ; neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction ; neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress. Thou shouldest not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity ; yea, thou shouldest not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor have laid hands on their substance in the day of their calamity : neither shouldest thou have stood in the crofs-way, to cut off those of his that did escape ; neither shouldest thou have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress,” ver. 10.—15. Several enormities are mentioned here, which prove the persecution

(1) Jerusalem, as well as Zion, sometimes signifies the city, sometimes the nation, as the term Church in our language, signifies promiscuously either the place of worship or the congregation, the connection with the whole context can determine in what sense it should be taken. Here it signifies the nation ; for the Jews at the time were not in possession of the city.

persecution to be very virulent. Together with shedding their blood, the prophet intimates a sale of their persons,—the spoiling of their effects,—lying in wait for those who endeavoured to escape,—delivering up such as were concealed.—While this violence is accompanied with despiteful joy of heart, and proud boasting.

We have a further account of this persecution in Joel iii. 3, 4, 5, 6. That it is the same which precedes the conversion and restoration of the Jews, is obvious, because it takes place “in those days, and in that time, when God shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem;” verse 1. After it follows the battle of Armageddon, largely described ; verse 9.—15. The words of the prophet here are quoted by the apostle, Rev. xiv. 17.—20. and chap. xix. 15. and applied to that event. The battle of Armageddon is followed by the Millennium, verse 16.—21. “They have cast lots for my people: And have given a boy for an harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink. Yea, and what have ye to do with me, O Tyre, and Zidon, and all the coasts of Palestine? And if ye recompense me, swiftly and speedily will I return your recompence upon your own head: Because ye have taken my silver and my gold, and have carried into your temples my goodly pleasant things.

“ The

“ The children also of Judah, and the children of Jerusalem, have ye sold unto the Grecians, that ye might remove them far from their border,” Joel iii. 3.—7. By this representation, the persecution rages throughout Palestine, particularly on the sea-coasts ; and the enormities of the persecution are aggravated by the sins of the persecutors. This is the more worthy of remark, because, like all the persecutions of the Papal power, it is carried on under pretence of promoting the interests of religion ; but, in reality, to gratify their lusts of whoredom and drunkenness, and to promote their idolatry. That they were “ sold to the Grecians,” in order to “ remove them far from their border,” verse 6. confirms the observation formerly made, that by Greece and Grecians are intended the Greek Church. If the country of Greece were intended, its distance from Judea is not so great as to justify that expression of removing them far from their border ; but, if the Greek church is intended, and the Jews are supposed to be sold to the most remote provinces of her communion, as those of Russia and Tartary, the prophet’s expression is fully vindicated. It would appear that the same persecution rages in the country of Moab. To this purpose is the exhortation of the Prophet Isaiah, chap. xvi. 3. 4. “ Hide the outcasts, bewray not him that wan-

“ dereth. Let mine outcasts dwell with thee,
“ Moab, be thou a covert to them from the
“ face of the spoiler.” That these calamities
came upon the Jews immediately before their
conversion and restoration, is evident from the
following expressions, which mark the time:
“ For the extortioner is at an end, the spoiler
“ ceaseth, the oppressors are consumed out of
“ the land: And in mercy shall the throne be
“ established; and he shall sit upon it in truth,
“ in the tabernacle of David, judging and seek-
“ ing judgment, and hasting righteousness;”
verse 4, 5. The instant approach of the battle
of Armageddon, and the Millennium, is offered
as an argument, to induce Moab to show lenity
in the persecution. The persecution, therefore,
immediately precedes these events.

It is probable, from a circumstance I shall afterwards mention¹, that this persecution shall prevail over a great part of Asia and Africa. The motive by which the blasphemous king is influenced, in carrying on this persecution, is likewise revealed. It is a desire to secure the possession of the land of Judea, where he now resides, to himself and his successors, accompanied with a jealousy, that the Jews may some day lay claim to it. He wishes to exterminate the Jews, upon the same principles that any usurper

(1) See *page 262*.

usurper desires the destruction of the Royal Family, whose throne he has seized. Thus, in the 35th chapter of Ezekiel, (a passage which I have already proved, refers to this persecution) God says to Edom, “ I will make thee perpetual desolations, because thou hast said, These two nations, and these two countries (of Judah and Israel) shall be mine, and we will possess it, whereas the Lord was there: Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord God, I will even do according to thine anger and according to thine envy, which thou hast used out of thy hatred against them;” ver. 9, 10, 11. “ I have heard all thy blasphemies which thou hast spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, They are laid desolate, they are given us to consume,” (or to eat their produce, as it might be rendered), ver. 12. “ Also, thou son of man, prophecy unto the mountains of Israel, and say, Thus saith the Lord God, Because the enemy hath said against you, Aha, even the ancient high places¹ are ours in possession;” chap. xxxvi. 1, 2. “ They have made

(1) High places in Scripture signify places of worship, as the ancient Edomites had no great veneration for the religion of the Jews, it is not likely that they would rejoice much in the possession of their places of worship. But the sentiment suggested is exceedingly descriptive of the

“ made you desolate, and swallowed you up on
“ every side, that ye might be a possession to the
“ residue of the heathen ;” ver. 3. “ which
“ have appointed my land into their possession,
“ with the joy of all their heart, with despiteful
“ minds, to cast it (the nation) out ;” ver. 5.
Here the reason of Edom’s violence is said to be
a desire to secure the possession of the land of
Israel and Judah, while that desire arises chiefly
from a veneration for the ancient high places.
The time of this possession is immediately be-
fore the battle of Armageddon and the resettle-
ment of the Jews in their own land, as appears
from the following verses: Therefore, thus
“ faith

the spirit of Popery. To recover Jerusalem out of the
hands of the infidels, has cost Europe, by the instigation
of the Popes, millions of men and of money ; and all
proceeded from a reverence for the high places. We
may therefore easily conceive, that the possession of these
will constitute the chief joy of the Pope and his adherents,
when resident in Judea ; and no wonder, since it will prove
the chief source of his authority and influence. If we
suppose the word *Bamoth* to be a singular noun, and not
the plural of *Bama*, (and doubtless it is connected with a
singular verb,) it signifies a height, a sacred inclosure, is
the same word used, Isa. l.iii. 9. for our Saviour’s tomb,
according to Lowth, (see his Translation of Isaiah, notes,
ad totum) it might be rendered *alia*, “The ancient se-
“ pulchre is ours in possession.” To recover the holy
sepulchre was the professed design of the Crusades.

“ faith the Lord God, I have lifted up mine
“ hand, Surely the heathen that are about you,
“ they shall bear their shame. But ye, O moun-
“ tains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your
“ branches, and yield your fruit to my people
“ of Israel; for they are at hand to come.”

Ver. 7. 8,

S E C T I O N III.

*The great Body of the Jewish Nation expelled from
their Dwellings by the Persecution, are gathered
together in the Deserts of Kurdistan.*

THE effect of this persecution is to expel the Jews from their residence, in the several countries where it rages, to seek security for their lives. By this means, the bulk of the nation is collected together into one place. In that situation, their condition is deplorable, the sword behind, famine before, nothing but inevitable destruction in their view. But the design of this distress in the secret council of God, is to bring them to a sense of their great national sin, as the brethren of Joseph in Egypt, when threatened with imprisonment and death, were made to cry out, “ Verily we are guilty concerning our brother;” to induce them likewise to have re-

course

course to the God of their fathers for deliverance, by sincere and ardent supplication. So God intimates by the prophet Isaiah, chap. xxvi. 16. “ Lord in trouble have they visited thee; “ they poured out a prayer when thy chastening “ was upon them.” And by Hosea, chap. v. 14, 15. “ I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as “ a young lion to the house of Judah; I, even “ I will tear and go away; I will take away, “ and none shall rescue him. I will go and re- “ turn to my place, till they acknowledge their “ offence, and seek my face: in their affliction “ they will seek me early.” In a word, his design is to convert them to the Christian faith, and bestow a spiritual deliverance from infidelity and delusion, as a prelude to a temporal deliverance. So God asserts by the prophet Eze- kiel, in the most explicit manner: “ As I live, “ faith the Lord God, surely with a mighty “ hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with “ fury poured out, will I rule over you: and I “ will bring you out from my people, and will “ gather you out of the countries wherein ye “ are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with “ a stretched out arm, and with fury poured “ out. And I will bring you into the wilder- “ ness of the people, and there will I plead “ with you face to face. Like as I pleaded “ with your fathers in the wilderness of the

“ land

“ land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith
“ the Lord God. And I will cause you to
“ pass under the rod, and I will bring you in-
“ to the bond of the covenant ;” Ezek. xx.

33.—37. The prophet represents them here, as “ gathered from the countries with fury
“ poured out ;—brought into the wilderness ;”—
there made to “ pass under the rod,” the cor-
rection of their own conscience, convincing of
sin ;—then admitted “ into the bond of the co-
“ venant ;” not that covenant made with their
fathers, but a “ better covenant, established on
“ better promises ;” Heb. viii. 6 ;—That men-
tioned by the prophet Jeremiah, chap. xxxi.
31.—34. “ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord,
“ that I will make a new covenant with the
“ house of Israel, and with the house of Judah ;
“ not according to the covenant that I made
“ with their fathers, in the day that I took
“ them by the hand, to bring them out of the
“ land of Egypt ; (which my covenant they
“ brake, although I was an Husband unto them,
“ saith the Lord :) But this shall be the cove-
“ nant that I will make with the house of
“ Israel, After those days, saith the Lord, I
“ will put my law in their inward parts, and
“ write it in their hearts ; and will be their
“ God, and they shall be my people. And
“ they shall teach no more every man his
“ neighbour,

“ neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord : for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord : for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

The same circumstances of bringing them into the wilderness, in consequence of distress, and then converting them, are represented by the Prophet Hosea. “ Therefore, behold, I will allure (persuade¹) her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. “ And I will give her her vineyards from thence, “ and the valley of Achor for a door of hope ; “ and she shall sing there, as in the days of her “ youth, and as in the day when she came up
“ out

(1) The word *patach* signifies in general to persuade or induce another to do what we desire, whether this is effected by promise or by threatening, by reward or by punishment, whereas the word *allure* limits the sense to a persuasion by promise : now the parallel passage in Ezekiel shews, that they were gathered by punishment, therefore not allured into the wilderness. The same sense is implied here ; for he says in the next verse, “ I will give her the valley of Achor,” that is of trouble or perturbation, “ as a door of hope ;” she therefore comes into the wilderness with perturbation, but God opens then a door of hope, by her conversion, so that he speaks comfortably to her after her arrival in the wilderness.

“ out of the land of Egypt. And it shall be at
“ that day, saith the Lord, that thou shalt call
“ me Ishi, (my husband); and shalt call me no
“ more Baali, (my lord).—And I will betroth
thee unto me for ever ;” Hosea ii. 14, 15, 16. 19.
Their conversion is represented by their entering
into a marriage-covenant with God. The same
figure is used in the Apocalypse: “ The mar-
“ riage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath
“ made herself ready ;” Rev. xix. 7. The
superior excellency of the evangelic covenant, to
which they are now admitted, beyond the legal,
is represented. It consists in giving a nearer
access to God, and more familiar converse with
him, resembling that of a wife with her hus-
band, not that of a servant with his master.
“ Thou shalt call me Ishi ; thou shalt call me
“ no more Baali.” So our Lord intimates,
“ I call you not servants, but friends.” We
“ have not received the spirit of bondage again
“ to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby
“ we cry Abba, Father.” We are not come
“ to mount Sinai, but to mount Zion.” That
they shall be gathered by persecution, is inti-
mated by the prophet Jeremiah, “ Behold, the
“ days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no
“ more be said, the Lord liveth that brought
“ up the children of Israel out of the land of
“ Egypt ; but, the Lord liveth that brought up

“ the children of Israel from the land of the
“ north, and from all the lands whither he
“ had driven them: and I will bring them again
“ into their land that I gave unto their fathers.
“ Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the
“ Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will
“ I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt
“ them from every mountain, and from every
“ hill, and out of the holes of the rocks;”
Jer. xvi. 14, 15, 16. Enemies and oppressors
are elsewhere represented under the metaphors
of fishers and hunters¹, because they use secret
wiles fitly compared to nets, as well as open
force, to make men their prey. The end of
this persecution is to gather them, and the time
is immediately before they go up to possess the
land given to their fathers.

The same circumstances are laid before us
briefly, but distinctly, in another passage of the
same prophet: “ The people which were left
“ of the sword, found grace in the wilderness;
“ even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest;
Jer. xxxi. 2. This wilderness, into which the
Jews are gathered, in order to their conversion,
appears from the concurring testimony of the
prophets,

(1) For the first, see Amos iv. 2. Hab. i. 14, 15. Ezekiel xii. 13. Hos. v. i.; for the second see Gen. x. 9. 1 Sam. xxvi. 20.

prophets, to be situated in Assyria, now Kurdistan. Thus the prophet Isaiah says, “ There shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left from Assyria, like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt;” chap. xi. 16.

No unprejudiced person can doubt that the whole of the passage from the 11th verse downwards, points to the future restoration of the Jews, without any reference to the return from Babylon. If so, they are represented, ver. 11. as collected from the several countries there mentioned. They are represented, ver. 16. as coming up from one country, namely, Assyria, to take possession of the land given their fathers; consequently Assyria is the place of rendezvous, from whence the nation comes up in a collected body, as formerly from the land of Egypt. Now, as the passages formerly quoted shew, that the Jews are collected into a wilderness, and this intimates that they are gathered together into Assyria, it is an obvious inference, that the wilderness is situated in Assyria.

In regard they are expelled from their habitations by persecution, as we have formerly seen, it is probable the persecution rages in the several countries mentioned in the 11th verse. In Assyria, (the inhabited parts of it, for they are forced into the desert), in Egypt; in Pathros,

a country of Egypt ; in Cush, or Arabia ; in Elam, or Persia ; in Shinar, or the country where Babylon stood ; in Hamath, or the confines of Syria ; and in the islands of the sea, the coasts of the Mediterranean. “ And it shall come to “ pass in that day, that the Lord shall beat off “ from the channel of the river unto the stream “ of Egypt, and ye shall be gathered one by “ one, O ye children of Israel. And it shall “ come to pass in that day, that the great trum- “ pet shall be blown, and they shall come which “ were ready to perish in the land of Affyria, “ and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and “ shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at “ Jerusalem ;” *Isaiah xxvii. 12, 13.* Every circumstance in this representation exactly quadrates with the view already given. All the Jews residing in the countries situated betwixt the Euphrates and the Nile, are “ beat off ;” violently expelled from their dwellings ; particularly, they are cast out of Egypt. But the effect of this expulsion, is to gather them together. They are gathered “ one by one ;” they steal away to the place of rendezvous, “ one by “ one.” The place of rendezvous is “ Affyria,” where “ they are ready to perish ;” to be fa- mished with hunger in the wilderness, before they are admitted into the bonds of the cove- nant ; but after they are admitted, they come

up from Assyria, “to worship the Lord in the “holy mount at Jerusalem.”—The prophet Hosea intimates the same truth, “They are gone “up to Assyria, a wild *afs* alone by himself;” Chap. viii. 9. All the circumstances of the narrative shew, that the time in which they are said to go up to Assyria, coincides with the close of their dispersion, and the period of their conversion. Their dispersion is represented (verse 8.) as the consequence of their sins, particularly their idolatry. “Israel is swallowed up; now “shall they be among the Gentiles as a vessel “wherein is no pleasure.” By a method common with the prophets, to contrast judgment with mercy, and mingle consolation with reproof, he immediately passes to the close of their dispersion, “For (But) they are gone up to Assyria.”—Their situation there can only apply to the close of their dispersion, and it exactly agrees to the views already given of it, “A wild *afs* alone by himself,” that is separated from the other nations, and, like a wild *afs*, living in the deserts. It is the period in which God will gather them, notwithstanding all their provoking sins. “Ephraim hath hired lovers. Yea, “though they have hired among the nations, “now will I gather them;” verse 9, 10. In a word, it is the period when they shall be brought to mourn for the “King of princes,” whom their

fathers

fathers crucified, and they so long rejected and blasphemed ; but the time¹ of their mourning shall be short, it shall be quickly succeeded by the joy of pardon and acceptance. These circumstances fix the time of their going to Assyria, to the period of their conversion ; and if so, Assyria must be the place of rendezvous. We have another passage to the same purpose, Hos. xi. 11. “They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt, “ and as a dove out of the land of Assyria : And “ I will place them in their houses, saith the “ Lord.”

God intimates mercy, ver. 8, 9.—their obedience, ver. 10. The mean of bringing them to obedience, “ He shall roar like a lion ;” that is, threaten their destruction by persecution. The consequence of this is, “ that the children shall “ tremble from the west ;” the most distant from the country where it rages shall be afraid. Such as dwell in Egypt shall flee from the persecution as a bird, they shall be “ outcasts.” They shall be in Assyria, “ as doves of the valley, all of “ them mourning every one for his iniquity.” After which they shall be settled in the land gi-

ven

(1) The particle *meat* signifies sometimes a short period, as Psal. xxxvii. 10. yet a little while and the wicked shall not be ; Jer. ii. 33. yet a little while and the time of her harvest shall come. Their mourning shall be great, Zech. xii. 10. but its duration short.

ven to their fathers. “ And I will place them “ in their houses, saith the Lord.” Here the same circumstances are detailed, and Assyria represented as the place of rendezvous.

The same circumstance is predicted by the prophet Micah, chap. vii. 12. “ In that day “ also he (Israel) shall come even to thee “ (Jerusalem) from Assyria.” The time specified is that in which Israel “ shall arise from his “ fall, and receive light from the Lord in dark-“ ness,” ver. 8.—in which he shall be made sensible of sin, and instructed in the righteousness of God. “ I will bear the indignation of “ the Lord, because I have sinned against him, “ until he plead my cause, and execute judg-“ ment for me : he will bring me forth to the “ light, and I shall behold his righteousness,” ver. 9.—in which his enemies “ shall be trodden “ down as the mire of the streets,” ver. 10.—in which the national polity shall be restored, and the decree of their enemies for their destruction shall be overturned, ver. 11.—At that time the nation shall come up from Assyria, to possess the fortified cities of Judah. Now all these circumstances can apply only to their future restoration. At that period, therefore, the nation comes in a collected body from Assyria, so that Assyria must be the place of rendezvous.

That

That **Affyria** is the place of rendezvous, appears from Zech. x. 10. "And I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Affyria ; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon, and place shall not be found for them." The passage of which this makes a part, is so obviously descriptive of the restoration of the Jews, in the latter days, that it has been so applied by eminent commentators¹. I shall not therefore spend time to prove it. Egypt is joined to Affyria, as in some of the parallel passages already mentioned, because the Egyptian Jews constitute the greater part of those gathered together; but still they are represented as "beat off," or "outcasts from Egypt as a trembling bird," pursued by its enemy, flying from Egypt ; whereas they are gathered into Affyria, and from thence come up in an united body, to take possession of the land given to their fathers. From all which, I infer, that the wilderness into which they are gathered, in order to their conversion, is situated in Affyria, now called **Curdistan**.

S E C-

(1) See Lowth's *Commentary* on the place.

SECTION IV.

The Jews are converted to Christianity in the Desert where they are gathered together.

WHEN the Jews are thus collected into the wilderness of Assyria, by the persecution carried on by the blasphemous king, when they are ready to perish for want, and their hearts, wrung by affliction, are poured out before the Lord, God manifests his mercy by their conversion, as a previous step to their restoration. The manner of it is distinctly represented to the prophet Ezekiel, in a vision, chap. xxxvii. 1.—10. and the meaning of that vision is opened up, ver. 11.—14. (“The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones,” &c.).

That the primary and only meaning of this passage is to represent the conversion of the Jewish nation, appears from the frequent use of this metaphor in scripture. Persons unconverted are said to be dead, while those that are converted are said to be made alive. So our Lord says, “Let the dead bury their dead;” Matt. viii.

22. Unless the term dead, as first expressed, signifies spiritually dead, it can have no meaning; but if it does, the meaning is obvious; that they were unconverted, did not incapacitate them to perform the funeral rites of one literally dead. Again, he says, “Verily I say unto you, “The hour now is, when the dead shall hear the “voice of the Son of God; and they that hear “shall live,” John v. 25. Our Lord could not refer to the general resurrection, since that great event is still a distant one, but evidently meant to affirm that the gospel was then preached, accompanied with power to convert the unconverted. So the Apostle says, “You hath he quickened “who were dead in trespasses and sins;” Eph. ii. 1. Again, I find this metaphor expressly applied as here, to the conversion of the Jewish nation, both in the Old and New Testament. Thus, Isa. xxvi. 19. “Thy dead men shall live together: with my dead body shall they arise. “Awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust; “for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the “earth shall cast out the dead.” The address is to the Jewish church, at the period immediately preceding their restoration from the great dispersion. It is as if God had said, Thy members, so long spiritually dead, shall be revived, in consequence of my covenant relation to them.

them¹, they shall be converted. Awake and sing ye who are spiritually dead, in a hopeless state, like those who dwell in the grave. Grace shall descend in abundance, and on the multitude as the dew upon the grafts; you shall be converted in a collected body, universally and instantaneously, as when the earth, at the general resurrection, shall cast forth the dead.

The Prophet Hosea seems to have their conversion in view, chap. vi. 2. “ After two days,

“ he

(1) I have followed in the paraphrase the sentiments of Lowth, in his Commentary, and of Bishop Lowth, in his Notes on his Translation of Isaiah. Both suppose “ my dead body” should be *my dead bodies*, and therefore the same with the “ dead men,” mentioned immediately before; only, whereas they are first represented as members of the church, they are afterwards represented as in covenant with God. But in regard the word is in the singular number, as rendered by our translation, “ My dead body,” I shall offer another sense which the expression suggests, leaving it to the reader’s choice. I suppose the words are spoken by the Messiah, intimating the time and the mean of their conversion; namely, when they are convinced of his resurrection, and in consequence of their belief in that truth. The Jews did and do believe that the body of Jesus is yet dead. So long as they retain those sentiments, their hope shall be buried in his grave; but when they are convinced that he is risen, together with that conviction, spiritual life shall be infused into their souls,

“ he will revive us ; in the third day, he will
“ raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.”
Similar expressions are used to denote their con-
version, Hosea xiii. 14. “ I will ransom them
“ from the power of the grave : I will redeem
“ them from death : O death I will be thy
“ plagues ; O grave I will be thy destruction.”
To the same purpose the prophet Zechariah says,
“ They shall live with their children, and turn
“ again ;” Zech. x. 9. And the Apostle ex-
presses “ the receiving them again” to be mem-
bers of the church, and the consequent increase
of conversion among the Gentiles, by these words,
“ Life from the dead ; Rom. xi. 15. Further,
the meaning of the resurrection in this passage
is clearly ascertained by the illustration annexed,
“ And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when
“ I have opened your graves, O my people, and
“ brought you up out of your graves, and shall
“ put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live ;”
Ezekiel xxxvii. 13, 14. So that, “ bringing
“ them up out of their graves,” is, in other
words, “ putting his spirit in them ;” that is,
converting them. Their restoration to the land
given their fathers, is an event posterior to their
conversion, not at all intended by the resurrec-
tion of the dry bones, but typified by the em-
blematical

(1) See an illustration of this passage, page 80.

blematical action of the prophet, in the following part of the chapter.

Having thus discovered the general meaning of the passage, by examining it more narrowly, we shall find a minute detail of the manner of their conversion. “ The hand of the Lord was “ upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of “ the Lord, and set me down in the midst of “ the valley which was full of bones ;” Ezekiel xxxvii. 1. The valley into which the prophet is introduced, is the wilderness of Affyria ; the bones are “ the whole house of Israel ” there collected : They are represented by bones, because of their hopeless condition, threatened with destruction, and no appearance of God’s interposition for their deliverance. “ They say, Our “ bones are dried, and our hope is lost ; we are “ cut off for our parts ;” Ezekiel xxxvii. 11. Their hopeless condition proceeds from their infidelity, though for the present moment they are not conscious of the cause. “ And caused “ me to pass by them round about ; and, be- “ hold, they were very many in the open valley ; “ and lo, they were very dry ;” Ezekiel xxxvii. 2. On a further survey, the prophet discerns the host to be numerous, but their infidelity to be riveted, and to have existed for a long time ; the bones are very dry, as having continued in a state of death for ages before. “ And he said unto me,

“ Son

“ Son of man, can these bones live? And I
“ answered, O Lord God, thou knowest;” Eze-
kiel xxxvii. 3. The prophet all along personates
the teachers employed by God at the time ap-
pointed, as his instruments to convert the mul-
titude. He begins therefore by removing their
scruples; he questions them if it was possible to
convert that infidel multitude to the faith of the
Messiah, whom their fathers crucified, and they
so long rejected and blasphemed? They an-
swer, That the thing is not probable; however,
that nothing is impossible for Divine Power.

“ Again, he said unto me, Prophesy upon
“ these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry
“ bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus faith
“ the Lord God unto these bones, Behold, I will
“ cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall
“ live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and
“ will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you
“ with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall
“ live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord;”
Ezekiel xxxvii. 4, 5, 6. Having removed the
scruples of the teachers, God expressly com-
mands them to prophesy, that is, to illustrate
the truth; proving from the word, that Jesus
of Nazareth is the Messiah. Exhorting the peo-
ple, at the same time, to receive this truth as
the only mean of making them spiritually alive,
restoring them to the favour of God, and deli-
vering

vering them from their present distress. Intimating likewise, for their encouragement, that the power of God was able to remove their scruples, however strongly confirmed, and long continued.

“ So I prophesied as I was commanded ; and “ as I prophesied there was a noise, and, be- “ hold, a shaking, and the bones came toge- “ ther, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, “ lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon “ them, and the skin covered them above : But “ there was no breath in them ;” Ezek. xxxvii. 7, 8. In consequence of the teacher’s exhortation, there is a stir among the people ; they give earnest attention to the truth, and, like the Jews of Berea, “ search the scriptures, to see “ whether these things be so.” By this disposition to receive the truth, there is a progress towards conversion ; and their state now differs from that in which they entered the wilderness, as the state of a dead body entire in its parts, cloathed with flesh, and covered with skin, differs, from that of dry bones, separated each from the other. “ But there was no breath in them.” They were still destitute of that faith which unites the soul to Christ, and derives life from him, the head of spiritual influences.

“ Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the “ wind, (spirit), prophesy, Son of man, and say
“ to

“ to the wind, (spirit), Thus saith the Lord
“ God, Come from the four winds, O breath,
“ (spirit), and breathe upon these slain, that
“ they may live;” Ezekiel xxxvii. 9.¹ God
therefore commands the teachers to illustrate
another truth, namely, that conversion is the
work of God’s Spirit ; and that, in order to re-
ceive his influence, it is necessary to pray for
him. “ So I prophesied as he commanded me,
“ and the breath (spirit) came into them,
“ and they lived and stood up upon their feet,
“ an exceeding great army ; Ezek. xxxvii. 10.
In obedience to God’s command, the teachers
instruct the multitude, concerning the necessity
of the influences of the Spirit, in order to convert
them. Afterwards they direct their prayers to
God, in which the people join, requesting his
influences. While they are thus employed, the
Spirit descends with his powerful and liberal in-
fluences, converting this great multitude, in-
stantly

(1) The word *Ruach*, in the original, signifies wind and spirit, and is commonly used to denote the Spirit of God. The repetition of the word prophesy in this verse, intimates two distinct parts of the direction ; *first*, to explain the doctrine concerning the influence of the Spirit ; *secondly*, to apply the doctrine, by directing them to pray for him. Accordingly an address to him immediately follows : “ O breath, breathe upon these slain, that they may live.”

stantly and universally, to the faith of the Mef-siah, whom their fathers crucified.

The circumstances respecting the manner of their conversion, represented here together in one view, are narrated separately in other pas-sages. That the Spirit of God is the agent in operating their conversion, appears from the testimony of Isaiah, who intimates, that they shall continue in a state of dispersion, exiled from their own land, until the Spirit is bestowed for their conversion. “ The palaces shall be for-“ faken ; the multitude of the city shall be “ left ; the forts and towers shall be for dens “ for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of “ flocks ; until the Spirit be poured upon us “ from on high, and the wilderness be a fruit-“ ful field, and the fruitful field be counted for “ a forest ;” Isa. xxxii. 14, 15. Yet more ex-pressly, “ Fear not, O Jacob my servant ; and “ thou Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. For “ I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, “ and floods upon the dry ground ; I will pour “ my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing up-“ on thine offspring ; and they shall spring up “ as among the grafs, as willows by the water-“ courses ;” Isa. xliv. 2, 3, 4. But above all, the prophet Joel represents their conversion by the influences of the Spirit, in the most explicit terms : “ And it shall come to pass afterwards,

O o

“ that

“ that I will pour forth my Spirit upon all flesh ;
“ and your sons and your daughters shall pro-
“ phecy, your old men shall dream dreams, your
“ young men shall see visions : and also upon
“ the servants and upon the handmaids in those
“ days, will I pour out my Spirit ;” Joel ii.
28, 29. That these words refer to the future
conversion of the Jews, is evident from the con-
nection. In the preceding context, we have
such an account of their happiness as can only
apply to the Millennium, ver. 21.—27. and
the following chapter (as we have seen, p. 264.)
applies to their conversion and restoration. Nor
can it be any objection that the Apostle Peter
applies the passage to the effusion of the Spirit
on the day of Pentecost, because some prophe-
cies have a double meaning : This is one of
these ; the effusion of the Spirit on the apostles
was an earnest of the more plentiful effusion of
the same Spirit on the whole congregation of
Israel, in their conversion. That the word of
God is the instrument in the hand of the Spirit
for operating their conversion, appears from
Isaiah : “ For as the rain cometh down, and the
“ snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither,
“ but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring
“ forth and bud, that it may give seed to the
“ sower, and bread to the eater ; so shall my
“ word be that goeth forth out of my mouth :
“ it

“ it shall not return unto me void ; but it shall
“ accomplish that which I please, and it shall
“ prosper in the thing whereto I sent it ;” Isa. iv.
10, 11. These expressions refer to the conversion of the Jews, as we learn from their connection, particularly the deliverance immediately following this effectual operation of God’s word. “ For ye shall go out with joy, and be
“ led forth with peace : the mountains and the
“ hills shall break forth before you into singing,
“ and all the trees of the field shall clap their
“ hands ;” Isa. iv. 12. The same truth is implied in that address of the Redeemer to the Jewish nation : “ As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord ; My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever ;” Isa. lix. 21. The preceding verse represents the future conversion of the Jewish nation, according to the interpretation of the apostle, Rom. xi. 26. In this therefore there is a promise, that the same word and Spirit which converted them, should continue to direct their posterity throughout all generations ; consequently it is by the word, as an instrument in the hand of the Spirit, that they are converted, which is confirmed by the

the testimony of the apostle: “ But even unto this “ day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their “ heart. Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the “ Lord, the veil shall be taken away; ” 2 Cor. iii. 15, 16. It is highly probable, that the operation of the word and Spirit shall be accompanied by an outward vision, to effect their conversion, in a manner so powerful, sudden, and universal, as it is represented. The learned Mede suggests this opinion, by way of conjecture¹, and founds it on St. Paul’s conversion, particularly his own declaration concerning it, 1 Tim. i. 16. “ How-“ beit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in “ me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-“ suffering, for a pattern to them which should “ hereafter believe on him to life everlasting; ” on which Mede observes, “ I pray consider se-“ riously that pattern of St. Paul’s conversion, “ so differing from all other men’s that ever “ were, and how fitly his condition before it re-“ sembles that of the Jews, in their bitter ob-“ stinacy against Christ and Christians. Why did “ Christ vouchsafe so strange a call to that man “ above other men! Was it not a pledge or “ pattern of something that would be vouch-“ safed his nation. I know not whether St. Paul’s “ meaning, but I am sure his words may be
“ applied

(1) See Mede’s Works, Book IV. Ep. 14. *Idem* Ep. 17. Book V. chap. 2.

“ applied to what I mean ”. Another ground of this opinion adduced by him, is Zech. xii. 10. “ They shall look upon me whom they have pierced ;” together with Matth. xxiii. 39. “ Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”—“ They will never believe that Christ reigns at the right hand of God, until they see him. It must be an invincible evidence which must convert them, after so many hundred years settled obstinacy².”

The conjecture of Mede appears to me highly probable, from certain expressions of the prophets, respecting the conversion of the Jewish nation. Thus, Isaiah says, “ They shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion ;” Isa. lii. 8. The return here promised is,

(1) Book IV. Ep. 14.

(2) *Ibid.* Mede builds further on the actual conversion of a great number of Jews in Arabia Felix, in the sixth century, by a vision ; Book IV. Ep. 17. But as the story is not well authenticated, I omit it. In the same place, he refutes *objections* that were made to this opinion by Dr. Twisse ; as, *first*, “ That the conversion is wrought by taking away the vail from their hearts ;” 2 Cor. iii. 16. The *answer* is, “ That the one is the internal cause, the other the external cause ; and their joint operation is perfectly consistent, as in the conversion of St Paul.” Another *objection* was offered : “ How such a vision should be

is, their restoration from their great dispersion, at that period, they shall see the Lord, "eye to eye." This expression is used (Numb. xiv. 14.) and applied to the visible manifestations of the divine presence vouchsafed to Israel in the wilderness: "They have heard that thou, Lord, "art seen face to face (eye to eye); and that "thy cloud standeth over them; and that thou "goest before them, by day-time in a pillar of "cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night." To the same purpose God says by the prophet Ezekiel, "I will bring you into the wilderness of "the people, and there will I plead with you "face to face. Like as I pleaded with your "fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, "so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God;" Ezek. xx. 35, 36.

The

"be manifested to the Jews, dispersed in several parts of "the world." To this the *answer* of Mede is not satisfactory: "What if the Jews alone shall see and hear the "voice of Christ, but none of the Gentiles, amongst "whom they dwell; though perhaps some strange light, "for a testimony, may at that instant surprise the whole "world, to the astonishment of the nations therein." This supposition multiplies miracles. Nor is it at all necessary, because the great body of the Jews are collected together into one place, previous to their conversion. Their God, the Saviour, reveals himself to them by a vision, which does not interfere with the ordinary conduct of Divine Providence in other places.

The expression “ face to face” is of the same import with “ eye to eye ;” and when the Deity is represented as one of the parties, it invariably signifies open vision of him, converse with him by our outward senses, distinct from impressions made on the mind, without the intervention of our bodily organs. Thus, when Jacob received a vision at Peniel, in which God appeared in a human form, wrestling and conversing with him, he says, “ I have seen God face to face ;” Gen. xxxii. 30. The same expression is used to denote the manner in which God conversed with Moses : “ and the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as “ a man speaketh unto his friend ; Exod. xxxiii. 11. “ And there arose not a prophet since in “ Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew “ face to face ;” Deut. xxxiv. 10. The meaning of the expression is best interpreted by God himself : “ If there be a prophet among you, “ I the Lord will make myself known to him “ in a vision ”, and will speak unto him in a “ dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is “ faithful in all mine house. With him will I “ speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and “ not in dark speeches : and the similitude of “ the

(1) A vision set in opposition to converse with God by the external senses, as here, must signify an extacy in which the senses underwent a temporary suspension. Such were the visions Daniel received.

“ the Lord shall he behold ;” Numb. xii. 6, 7, 8. The phrase likewise represents the manner in which God conversed with the congregation of Israel from mount Sinai. “ The Lord talked with you *face to face* in the mount, out of the midst of the fire ;” Deut. v. 4. Doubtless on that occasion they saw with their bodily eyes, and heard with their bodily ears. When Gideon perceived by the miracle he wrought, that the person who talked with him was an angel, he said, “ I have seen an angel of the Lord *face to face* ;” Judges vi. 22. I cannot doubt, therefore, from the use of the expression in other places, but God intimates by the prophet Ezekiel, that he will give Israel in the wilderness of Affyria, some open visible manifestation of himself, similar to that given their fathers of old, for the express purpose of bringing them into the bond of the covenant, that is, converting them.

Nor does the manifestation promised appear to be a transient vision, like that seen by the apostle in his way to Damascus, but a permanent glory during their continuance in the wilderness of Affyria. This is implied in the expressions of Ezekiel: “ Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt.” God pleaded with their fathers not

not for a day, or a year, but for forty years together. It is clearly asserted by the prophet Micah, chap. vii. 15. “ According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt, will I shew unto him marvellous things,” (wonders). The conduct of God to Israel in the wilderness was one series of wonders, and the pillar of cloud and of fire, the visible symbol of his presence, never left them by day or by night.

Such are the means of their conversion, the effect produced by them is in general life. The movements of the spiritual life, when unfolded, are godly sorrow for their past sins. This is represented by the prophet Jeremiah: “ A voice was heard upon the high places, weeping and supplications of the children of Israel: for they have perverted their way, and they have forgotten the Lord their God. Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God. Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel. For shame hath devoured the labour of our fathers from our youth; their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters. We lie down

“ down in our shame, and our confusion cover-
“ eth us: for we have sinned against the Lord
“ our God, we and our fathers, from our youth,
“ even unto this day, and have not obeyed the
“ voice of the Lord our God;” Jer. iii. 21.—25.
“ I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning him-
“ self thus, Thou hast chastised me, and I was
“ chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the
“ yoke: Turn thou me, and I shall be turned;
“ for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after
“ that I was turned, I repented; and after that
“ I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh:
“ I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because
“ I did bear the reproach of my youth. Is
“ Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child?
“ for since I spake against him, I do earnestly
“ remember him still; therefore my bowels are
“ troubled for him: I will surely have mercy
“ upon him, saith the Lord;” Jer xxxi. 18,
“ 19, 20. “ In those days, and in that time,
“ saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall
“ come, they and the children of Judah toge-
“ ther, going and weeping: they shall go, and
“ seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the
“ way to Zion, with their faces thitherward,
“ saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the
“ Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not
“ be forgotten;” Jer. l. 4, 5. “ Take with
“ you words, and turn to the Lord, say unto
“ him

“ him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us
“ graciously: so will we render the calves of
“ our lips. Asshur shall not save us; we will
“ not ride upon horses; neither will we say
“ any more to the work of our hands, Ye are
“ our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth
“ mercy.—Ephraim shall say, What have I to do
“ any more with idols?” Hosea xiv. 2, 3. 8.

Their sorrow shall be excited in a particular manner for their great national sin, “ crucifying
“ by wicked hands the Lord of glory,” and continuing for so long a period to reject and blaspheme him. “ They shall sorrow a little
“ (time) for the burden of the king of prin-
“ ces;” Hosea viii. 10. “ They shall look up-
“ on me whom they have pierced, and they
“ shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his
“ only son, and shall be in bitterness for him,
“ as one that is in bitterness for his first-born;”
Zech. xii. 10. Their unbelief of this prophecy concerning their conversion previous to its accomplishment, shall be powerfully urged on their consciences, to convince them of sin. God will address them upon their conversion, in the language of the prophet: “ I have shewed thee
“ new things from this time, even hidden
“ things, and thou didst not know them. They
“ are created now, and not from the beginning;
“ even before the day (of their accomplish-
“ ment)

“ ment) when thou heardest them not; lest
“ thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them.
“ Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest
“ not; yea, from that time that thine ear was
“ not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest
“ deal very treacherously, and wast called
“ a transgressor from the womb;” Isa. xlvi.ii.
6, 7, 8. Prophecies which they professed to be-
lieve before hand, such as the appearance of the
Messiah at a particular period, they rejected
when accomplished; but for this they have a
specious apology, that they expect their accom-
plishment still. But as to the prophecy con-
cerning their conversion, though they have fre-
quently heard it, they do not believe it, nor ex-
pect its accomplishment. When they are con-
verted therefore, and submit to him whom they
rejected and blasphemed, for two thousand years
before, the event must afford themselves a con-
vincing evidence of their obstinate resistance to
God’s revealed will. The movements of the
spiritual life proceed from a conviction of sin,
to faith in the Saviour; for the Saviour now
addresses them, “ Come ye near unto me, hear
“ ye this: I have not spoken in secret from the
“ beginning; from the time that it was, there
“ am I: and now the Lord God and his Spirit
“ hath sent me. Thus saith the Lord, thy Re-
“ deemer, the Holy One of Israel, I am the Lord
“ thy

“ thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which
“ leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest
“ go ;” Isa. xlviii. 16, 17. As Joseph when
he revealed himself to his brethren, said, “ Come
“ near unto me, I am your brother Joseph,
“ whom ye sold into Egypt :” So the Saviour
says, Come near unto me, I am your brother
Jesus whom ye crucified. I did not conceal
this truth from the beginning. I am that per-
son who was declared to be the Messiah, from
the first preaching of the gospel ; and though
ye formerly rejected me, Jehovah has now sent
me with his Spirit to convince you : Thus I
speak with the authority of Jehovah : though
I became your kinsman Redeemer, I was known
to your fathers by the name of the Holy One
of Israel ; and now I am to enter into cove-
nant with you, as your God, to teach you
wherein true happiness consists, to lead you in
the way of everlasting life. As the brethren
of Joseph were “ troubled at his presence,” re-
flecting on their former unworthy treatment of
him, so the Jews shall now be filled with terror
as well as shame, for their former conduct. It
will be natural for them to reflect, that they
not only shed his blood, but likewise said, when
a heathen’s conscience resiled from the crime,
“ Let his blood be on us and on our children ;”
Matth. xxvii. 25. ; imprecating the punishment
due

due to the crime, on their posterity, throughout all generations. To remove that terror, the Saviour further addresses them : “ As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to-day do I declare, that I will render double unto thee ; ” Zech. ix. 11, 12. As if he had said, In consequence of my covenant with you, ratified by the

(1) The address here is not by God the Father to the Mediator, as some have imagined, but by the Mediator to the Church, for the pronouns are in the feminine gender. That the address is to the Jewish church, at the time of their conversion, is evident from the connection. Zech. ix. 9, as explained in the New Testament, is applicable to our Saviour’s first appearance. The meaning of the emblematical action performed by him, is shewed, verse 10. It signifies that his kingdom should be established not by war, but peace. This leads the prophet to mention a circumstance which would appear at first view improbable, That his kingdom should be very extensive, notwithstanding his renouncing the common means of conquest. In regard this enlargement of the Messiah’s kingdom takes place at the Millennium, he is from thence led to mention the circumstances that immediately precede that period ; as the conversion of the Jews, verse 11, 12. ; the battle of Armageddon, verse 13, 15. ; and their resettlement in the land given their fathers, verse 1, 6, 17.

the blood shed on the crofs, that blood which was typified by the sacrifices of old, I announce to you forgiveness, and a deliverance from the pit of destruction, which your sins deserved; that pit where “the worm dieth not, “and the fire is not quenched;” where a drop of water is not afforded to cool the parched tongue. You have felt the severity of the blood shed crying out for vengeance: ye shall now experience its efficacy pleading for atonement and forgiveness. Turn ye, therefore, to me, with sincere faith, and unfeigned repentance; you shall find in me a strong hold, “a hiding place “from the wind, a covert from the tempest.” Though surrounded with the terrors of destruction, as prisoners under sentence of death, who have their execution in view, your hope of deliverance, though faint, shall not be disappointed. So far shall I be from returning on your own heads your unworthy treatment of me, that I solemnly declare, I will bestow at this time, a measure of happiness, double to that your fathers enjoyed in their most flourishing times.—Forgiveness thus announced with authority, shall be received with faith. Sorrow shall be swallowed up of joy, and the multitude shall cry out with raptures, “How beautiful “upon the mountains are the feet of him that “bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; “that

“ that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation ; that faith to Zion, Thy God reigneth ! ” Isa. lii. 7. That person in whom they formerly “ saw no beauty,” that they should desire him, they now see to be most beautiful in his person ; as “ being the brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person ;” yea, “ The mighty God,

(1) That the primary and only meaning of this passage, is to represent the sentiments of the Jews concerning the Saviour, upon their conversion, is evident, 1st, From the connection. This chapter, to verse 13. is a continuation of the subject treated of in the preceding, which we have seen refers to their restoration in the latter days. 2^d, It is said, verse 6. They shall know my name ; intimating their conversion from a state of ignorance and infidelity. 3^d, Seeing an open vision, verse 8. ; and the gospel, in consequence of their conversion, propagated to all the ends of the earth, verse 10. ; are circumstances that accompany their last restoration, but by no means applicable to the return from Babylon. 4th, The Apostle Paul applies the text to the first preachers of the gospel, Rom. x. 15. Now the preachers of the gospel are beautiful, on account of the message they carry. We preach not ourselves, but Jesus the Lord. The prophet therefore, in mentioning an individual, must understand the Saviour here represented as the Messenger ; because he personally carries to the Jews the message concerning himself, by which they are convinced and converted.

“ God, The everlasting Father.” As drawing the veil of humanity over the glory of the Deity, that his terrors should not make them afraid, conformably to the request of their fathers; Exod. xx. 19. They see him beautiful in those circumstances in which he reveals himself to them, on the mountains of Assyria, when they are surrounded with outward calamities, and alarmed with inward terrors of eternal destruction. They see his feet once nailed to the cross, his ignominious death so offensive to their pride, most beautiful. It is by it “ they receive “ the atonement.” They see him in his death and sufferings a more glorious conqueror than their fathers expected; that he hath vanquished the host of darkness, overcome death, and emancipated millions from the miseries of hell, to sing glad hallelujahs in heaven.

They see his doctrine, though once rejected by them, most beautiful, as shewing the way of reconciliation betwixt an offended God and guilty sinners,—breathing peace to the guilty conscience;—revealing the greatest good and the truest happiness of men;—that happiness which is suitable to the dignity of their spiritual nature, and will prove lasting as the ages of eternity. In a word, they see him beautiful in the declaration he now makes, That he who was the God of their fathers, and the Ruler of

the universe, is the Head of the church, and will admit them to be members of that society. On this view, “ Thy watchmen shall lift up “ the voice ; with the voice together shall they “ sing ;” Isaiah lii. 8. “ The Redeemer shall “ (thus) come to Zion, (the congregation of “ Israel) and turn away ungodliness from (the “ descendants of) Jacob ;” Rom. xi. 26. These are the days in which the Lord “ will raise un- “ to David a righteous Branch, and a King “ shall reign and prosper, and shall execute “ judgment and justice in the earth. In his days “ Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell “ safely ; and this is his name whereby he shall “ be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS ;” Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. “ The children of Israel shall “ seek the Lord their God, and David their “ king ; and shall fear the Lord and his good- “ ness in the latter days ;” Hosea iii. 5. Yea, “ they shall serve the Lord their God, and Da- “ vid their King, whom (God) will raise up “ unto them ;” Jer. xxx. 9. “ They shall sing “ unto the Lord ; for he hath done excellent “ things : this is known in all the earth. Cry out “ and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion : for great “ is the holy One of Israel in the midst of thee ;” Isa. xii. 5, 6. They shall submit to him not only as their Prince to govern them, but likewise as the great Shepherd of their souls, to “ make “ them

“them lie down in the green pastures” of his ordinances, to “lead them beside the still waters” of his grace, to “restore their souls” by communion with him, and to carry them forward in the way of righteousness to life everlasting. “I will set up one Shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their Shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it;” Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24. “And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God; and they shall abide, (return): for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth;” Micah v. 4.

That

(1) The whole passage, of which these words make a part, afford a striking demonstration that the person here represented as a Shepherd and Ruler, can be no other than Jesus of Nazareth. Bethlehem is represented as the place of his nativity, verse 2. The Scribes, in our Saviour’s time, applied the passage to the Messiah; for they quote it in answer to Herod’s query, Where ought Christ to be born? And the prophecy was fulfilled by the special direction of Divine Providence: Mary, the mother of Jesus, had her ordinary residence in Nazareth; but, in consequence of an edict of enrolment, issued by Augustus,

she

That the Jews shall be converted together at the same instant of time, is implied in these expressions : “ And the breath (spirit) came unto them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.” This circumstance is likewise confirmed by parallel passages. It is an obvious inference from the detail of events, Ezek. xx. 33.—37. They are said to be gathered together ;—brought into the wilderness ;—pleaded with, as God formerly pleaded with their fathers ;—brought into the bond of

she was obliged to go to Bethlehem, because she was of the house and lineage of David. There Jesus was born. The prophecy, at the same time, points to an existence he had before his birth, an existence from all eternity. “ His goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” Intimating the union of the divine and human nature in his person. The prophecy next shews that the Jews would not submit to him as their Shepherd and Ruler, upon his first appearance. “ Therefore, will he give them up ;” verse 3. ; that is, he shall reject them, that they shall not be in the number of his subjects. And how long ? “ Until the time that she which travailleth, hath brought forth ;” that is, until the time that the Gentile church, formerly barren, should prove the mother of a numerous offspring to God ; according to the prophecy of Isaiah, “ Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear ;—more are the children of the desolate, than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord ;”

Isa.

of the covenant.—Now God pleaded with their fathers as a nation, and admitted them into covenant as a nation at Sinai.—So it shall be in their conversion. The same truth is asserted, Isa. xxvi. 19. “Thy dead men shall live,—for “thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth “shall cast out the dead.” This circumstance is implied in the words of Zechariah, chap. iii. 9. “I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.””

S E C.

Isa. liv. 1. And this is the period fixed for the conversion of the Jews by the Apostle Paul, “until the fulness of the Gentiles be brought in; and then all Israel shall be saved;” Rom. xi. 25, 26. So here “then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto (together with) the children of Israel;” that is, the remnant of his brethren. The tribe or kingdom of Judah shall return to God in the way of faith and repentance, together with the ten tribes, the kingdom of Israel. As another mark of the time when he should prove a Mediator to Israel, and reconcile them to God, it is said, “When the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our palaces;” Micah. v. 5. ; that is, when the blasphemous king shall enter Judea, and set up his residence in Jerusalem, he is called the Assyrian: Isa. x. 5.

(1) Joshua, the High-Priest, typifies the Jewish nation at the period immediately preceding their conver-

on

SECTION V.

The Jews are trained by God in the Desert forty Years from the Date of their conversion.

AFTER the Jews are converted, they remain forty years in the wilderness of Assyria before they

tion. His filthy garments represent their sins, particularly their blasphemy and infidelity. Satan's accusation shews the virulence of their enemies, as well as their own deserts. The interference of the angel, called also the Lord (Jehovah), signifies the seasonable interposition of the Mediator, to prevent their destruction. And the protest of the angel to Joshua, is that pleading of the Mediator with the Jews, at the time he admits them into the bond of the covenant. The time of these proceedings is noted, Zech. iii. 8, 9. Joshua and his fellows are said to be men wondered at; that is, persons mentioned as signs and types of other men, and of other times; namely, of that period when God shall bring forth his servant, the Branch that shall grow out of the roots of Jesse; Isa. xi. 1. Yet, not the time in which he shall first spring from the root of Jesse, but the time when God shall bring him forth; that is, manifest him to Israel. To illustrate this circumstance more clearly, is the design of the following verse: “For behold, the stone that I have

“laid

they take possession of the land given their fathers. I have already mentioned some of the grounds of this conjecture, as, 1. It requires a considerable

“ laid before Joshua ; upon one stone shall be seven eyes :
“ Behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the
“ Lord of Hosts ;” Zech. iii. 9. This stone is the same men-
tioned Isa. xxviii. 16. Behold, I lay in Zion for a foun-
“ dation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone,
“ a sure foundation.” Explained to signify Christ, on
whom the church, God’s spiritual temple, is built ;
1 Pet. ii. 5, 6. But when this stone was first laid, it was
refused by the builders, though appointed by God to be
the head-stone of the corner ; Psal. cxviii. 22. It was
“ for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence, to
“ both the houses of Israel ; for a gin, and for a snare,
“ to the inhabitants of Jerusalem ;” Isa. viii. 14. In at-
tempting to remove this foundation-stone, which God
had placed in Zion, it recoiled upon them, “ and ground
“ to powder” their political and religious establishment ;
Matt. xxi. 44. In that state things remain, but at a fu-
ture period, on this same stone shall be “ seven eyes,” as
the Lamb of God is represented with “ seven eyes ;” and
these are said to signify “ the seven spirits of God,” or
in other words, the various and perfect influences of the
Spirit of God. So here seven eyes are cut out as hiero-
glyphicks on the foundation-stone, to indicate that the
Spirit of God, with his liberal and perfect influences,
shall discover the Saviour to Israel. In consequence of
this view, the stone which at first appeared rough and
unpolished,

considerable time to collect the allies of the beast, Rev. xvi. 14.—16. 2. I suppose the difference betwixt the two numbers mentioned, Daniel xii. 11, 12. refers to this period. The 1290 refers to the conversion of the Jews, the 1335 to the commencement of the Millennium; betwixt these there is a difference of forty-five years, of which forty elapse during their continuance in the wilderness, and the remaining five after their settlement in the land before a universal peace is established, when the spirit of prophecy begins to reckon the Millennium. 3. The words of Micah vii. 15. refer to the period which elapses betwixt their conversion and their settlement in Judea, and explicitly assert a continuance in the wilderness for forty years; “ according to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him mar-
“ yelous

unpolished, unworthy of being the foundation of God's temple, shall now appear to be of exquisite workmanship, worthy of the finger of God. Though Jesus, on his first appearance, seemed to the Jews unworthy of being the Messiah, on account of his outward meanness, and ignominious death; yet, when revealed to their nation by the Spirit of God, his person will appear infinitely glorious, and the way of salvation through him infinitely worthy of the wisdom of God to contrive, and the power of God to execute. At that time God will remove the iniquity of their nation in one day.

“vellous things.” 4. I now add, that the expressions of Ezekiel imply a continued abode in the wilderness where they are converted, for that period. “I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you;” Ezek. xx. 35, 36. The comparison here may refer not only to the manner of pleading by open vision with the whole nation, but likewise to the time of pleading, which was full forty years. 5. The words of Hosea, chap. xii. 9. suggests a continued abode in the wilderness: “I, that am the Lord thy God from the Land of Egypt, will yet make thee to dwell in tabernacles, as in the days of the solemn feasts;” Micah vii. 14. 6. The reasons which induced God to continue their fathers in the wilderness forty years, will apply to their posterity; they are in fact so applied by the prophets.

One reason for continuing their fathers in the wilderness was, to teach them an intimate dependence upon God for their temporal subsistence, a maxim of practical piety as necessary as it is difficult for the generality of mankind. Besides, it is one thing to instruct individuals in this truth, and quite another thing to inculcate it on a whole nation. It was therefore God who fed

them forty years without the ordinary means of sowing and reaping ; so Moses asserts, “ The “ Lord thy God led thee these forty years in “ the wilderness,—and fed thee with manna ;— “ that he might make thee know, that man doth “ not live by bread only, but by every word “ that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord “ doth man live ; ” Deut. viii. 2, 3. Now, I find promises of a similar import immediately after their conversion, and for the same end of teaching them an intimate dependence upon God. Thus, “ When the poor and needy seek “ water, and there is none, and their tongue “ faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, “ I the God of Israel will not forsake them. “ I will open rivers in high places, and foun-“ tains in the midst of the vallies : I will make “ the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry “ land springs of water. I will plant in the “ wilderness the cedar, the shittah-tree, and “ the myrtle, and the oil-tree ; I will set in the “ desert the fir-tree, and the pine, and the box-“ tree together. That they may see, and know, “ and consider, and understand together, that “ the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the “ Holy One of Israel hath created it ; ” Isa. xli. “ 17.—20. “ Remember ye not the former “ things, neither consider the things of old. “ Behold, I will do a new thing : now it shall “ spring

“ spring forth ; shall ye not know it ? I will
“ even make a way in the wilderness, and ri-
“ vers in the desert. The beast of the field
“ shall honour me, the dragons and the owls :
“ because I give waters in the wilderness, and ri-
“ vers in the desert, to give drink to my people,
“ my chosen ;” Isa. xliii. 17.—20. “ The Lord
“ hath redeemed his servant Jacob. And they
“ thirsted not when he led them through the
“ deserts : he caused the waters to flow out of
“ the rock for them ; he clave the rock also,
“ and the waters gushed out ;” Isa. xlvi. 20, 21.
It will be readily allowed, that these expres-
sions have much of a figurative meaning ; but
when we reflect that they are introduced imme-
diately upon the conversion of the Jews, as ap-
pears from the context¹ ; that they obviously
refer to the support of Israel in the wilderness of
old ; that the Jews at the time of their con-
version are in the wilderness of Assyria, ready
to perish, we must infer, that they have much
of a literal meaning likewise ; that they imply
promises of temporal sustenance, as well as spi-
ritual

(1) It is said, in the last cited passage, “ Go ye forth
“ out of Babylon,” but the term there does not refer to
ancient Babylon, any more than it does, Rev. xvii. 5. It
signifies the persecution carried on by the blasphemous
king, the head of the system of spiritual Babylon.

ritual nourishment, not for a day or a year, but for a considerable length of time. Were they only to march through the wilderness, in order to take possession of the land, as they came formerly from Babylon, consuming no more time than the distance betwixt the two places required ; they might carry their provisions along with them, consequently such large and repeated promises of support in the wilderness would be unnecessary.

Another reason for continuing their fathers in the wilderness was, to consume the wicked from among the congregation ; so God says : “ And “ your children shall wander in the wilderness “ forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until “ your carcases be wasted in the wilderness ; ” Numb. xiv. 33. The destruction of these murmurers was designed not only as a punishment to them, but likewise as a benefit to the whole congregation, by teaching them the use of discipline, and training them by the exercise of discipline, to form them a pure society, previous to their settlement in the land.

Now that there are some wicked individuals among the Jews, after the nation is converted in one body, we may infer from expressions added to the promises just quoted. “ There “ is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked ; ” Isa. xlvi. 22. These same expressions are repeated

peated, Isa. lvii. 21. and follow immediately after the promise of their conversion. Still more explicitly, Ezek xi. 19, 20. God promises, “ I “ will give them one heart, and I will put a “ new spirit within you : and I will take the “ stony heart out of their flesh, and will give “ them an heart of flesh. That they may walk “ in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, “ and do them : and they shall be my people, “ and I will be their God ;” promises that clearly refer to their conversion in the latter day. He further adds, “ But as for them whose heart “ walketh after the heart of their detestable “ things and their abominations, I will recom- “ pence their way upon their own heads, saith “ the Lord God ;” ver. 21. From which I conclude, that after the nation is converted, there will be some wicked men among them, and consequently it requires time to purge out these from among the congregation, by the slow exercise of discipline.

Accordingly, this is asserted in the most unequivocal manner : “ And I will purge out from “ among you the rebels, and them that trans- “ gress against me : I will bring them forth “ out of the country where they sojourn, and “ they shall not enter into the land of Israel ;” Ezek. xx. 38. Every circumstance mentioned is contained in this passage. There are rebels and

and transgressors against God in the congregation, after they are admitted into the bond of the covenant.

They are transgressors in the wilderness after they are brought “out of the country where “they sojourned.” These transgressors die in the wilderness ; “they shall not enter into the “land of Israel.”

This is further confirmed, and the nature of their rebellion in some measure illustrated ; Ezek. xxxiv. 16.—22. God having promised to restore his people, and to feed them like a flock on the mountains of Israel ; ver. 14, 15. he proceeds to shew the previous steps, by which he prepared them for this good pasture ; so that the passage intends his gathering them into the wilderness in which they are converted, and his treatment of them there after their conversion : “I will seek that which was lost, and “bring again that which was driven away, “and will bind up that which was broken, “and will strengthen that which was sick : but “I will destroy the fat and the strong ; I will “feed them with judgment. And as for you, “O my flock, thus saith the Lord God, Behold, “I judge between cattle and cattle, between “the rams and the he-goats. Seemeth it a “small thing unto you to have eaten up the “good pasture, but ye must tread down with “your

“ your feet the residue of your pastures ? and
“ to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye
“ must foul the residue with your feet ? And
“ as for my flock, they eat that which ye have
“ trodden with your feet ; and they drink that
“ which ye have fouled with your feet. There-
“ fore, thus saith the Lord God unto them, Be-
“ hold I, even I, will judge between the fat
“ cattle and between the lean cattle. Because
“ ye have thrust with side and with shoulder,
“ and pushed all the diseased with your horns,
“ till ye have scattered them abroad ; there-
“ fore will I seek my flock, and they shall no
“ more be a prey ; and I will judge between
“ cattle and cattle.” I apprehend, that the
crime here laid to their charge is pharisaical
pride. They are fat, that is, puffed up with
a conceit of their own superior attainments.
They “tread down the residue of their pasture,
“ and foul the deep waters of which they drink
“ with their feet.” They despise the ordinan-
ces of religion dispensed among them, instead
of receiving instruction with humility ; they
set themselves up as judges and censurers of
their teachers. “ They thrust with side and
“ shoulder, and push the diseased with their
“ horns.” The use they make of their abili-
ties and knowledge is, to stagger the faith of
the infirm, reversing the apostle’s maxim, “ re-
“ ceiving

“ ceiving him that is weak in the faith to doubtful disputations, not to godly edifying.” The company of Korah, Dathan and Abiram of old, shewed much of this spirit. They pretended a respect for the congregation of the Lord, as being holy, yet they set themselves in opposition to the authority which God established in the congregation, for the express purpose of maintaining and promoting that holiness. A similar spirit shewed itself early in the church of Christ: “ I wrote unto the church: (says the apostle, 3 John, ver. 9.) but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not.” In every period, persons of this disposition have appeared, perhaps they are more numerous in proportion to the greater purity in which the ordinances of religion are dispensed. Their conduct proceeds from the enmity of the carnal mind varnished over with an appearance of superior sanctity; it is more offensive to God, and more injurious to the interests of religion, than open infidelity or profaneness.

A third reason for continuing Israel in the wilderness of old, was to form them into a national church, by the use of the ordinances, government and discipline which they were afterwards to practise in the land. Just so, the Jews, when converted, shall be trained under the immediate

mediate eye of God in the wilderness, as a Christian national church, not only for their own advantage, but likewise as a model for the several Christian churches spread over the earth during the Millennium. Perhaps such a model may be thought by some unnecessary, in regard Christianity has been long established in the world, and some excellent patterns of national churches are in existence. I answer to this, that the state of the Christian church in past ages, and in the present, evidently proves the necessity of a more perfect model of a national church than has hitherto appeared, as well for the benefit of individual churches, as for the union of the whole into one. For the first three hundred years, the Christian church was not acknowledged by the civil power, far less protected by it; such a state, therefore ill agrees with the Millennial church, “when the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ;” Rev. xi. 15. When “kings are the nursing fathers, and queens the nursing mothers of the church;” Isa. xlix. 23. Some time after she received the protection of the civil power, the ecclesiastical swallowed up the civil authority, and established the most despotic tyranny. This surely can be no model for the Millennium. Since the Reformation, several national churches have been established

on a rational plan; but no plan has yet been discovered, sufficient to unite the several reformed churches. In order to this, several questions remain to be determined, to which the researches of divines, and sagacity of politicians, have been hitherto unequal. Such as, what kind of church-government is of divine authority? How far the civil and ecclesiastical authority ought to be blended together, and how far they ought to be distinct? What is the most profitable manner of dispensing the ordinances of religion? How far ought discipline to extend? Should it reach to the persons and property of men, for sins hurtful to their eternal salvation though not so immediately injurious to society? But all these questions shall be resolved, and made level to every capacity, in that plan of a national establishment, which God himself will form for the Jews in the wilderness. His authority likewise in forming it will induce other churches to adopt it as a pattern; whereas, though the same plan did at present exist, no human reasoning would induce another church having a different plan, to quit their own and receive it. The proof of this sentiment, that the converted Jews shall furnish the model of a national church, rests on the glorious description given us of the Jewish national establishment, and of the communion subsisting

subsisting betwixt them and the Gentile churches at the Millennium, which I shall afterwards more particularly explain.

Perhaps too, as the Mosaic economy was first given in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so its spiritual meaning shall be fully unfolded in the wilderness, when the Jews are converted. The general design of it is already revealed, and forms an argument for the doctrine of the atonement, which the cavils of adversaries can never overturn; because every illustration of it, without a typical reference to the atonement, appears extremely futile and absurd. However, the minutiae of that economy still remain involved in obscurity, and perhaps will continue so until the Jews are converted, when the Spirit that dictated, shall unfold its meaning fully, adding much to the knowledge of the church, without making any addition to the canon of scripture.

SECTION VI.

The Conversion of the Jews gives joy to the Church of Christ, but stirs up the Papal Power to collect Forces against them.

LET us now leave the Jews training under the eye of God in the wilderness, and take a view of the effect which their conversion has on the rest of the world.

An event so remarkable and important shall be speedily conveyed on the wings of fame, through the world, and persons shall be variously affected, according to their attachment to the religion of Jesus Christ. On the contrary, the true church in every corner of the world, shall receive in the tidings, that message, "A voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great;" Rev. xix. 5. And their hearts, tuned in unison with their voices, shall answer the message, by singing the hymn of praise, which is thus described: " And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent

“ omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints;” Rev. xix. 6.—8.

This event shall likewise prove the occasion of enlargement to the church, by spreading the gospel with additional success among the nations still adhering to a false religion. In the prophecy of Isaiah, we have several animated addresses to false gods, and their worshippers, founded upon the conversion of the Jewish nation, representing, no doubt, the arguments that shall be successfully used by the preachers of these times, for spreading the gospel. Thus: “ Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods;” Isa. xli. 21, 22, 23. As if he had said, “ Produce, O idols, the reasons on which ye build your claim to divinity. Prove your claim in the manner

“ I have now done, by the completion of prophecy. Shew that ye have uttered prophecies which have been already accomplished, or that hereafter be accomplished ; or utter prophecies now, with assurance of their completion : that we may know your claim to be just.”

To the same purpose, Isa. xlivi. having briefly mentioned the conversion of the Jews, ver. 8. he adds, “ Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled : who among them can declare this, and shew us former things ! let them bring forth their witnessesses, that they may be justified : or let them hear, and say, It is truth. Ye are my witnessesses saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen : that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he : before me there was no god formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour ; ” Isa. xlivi. 9, 10, 11.

So Isa. xliv. The conversion of the Jews is represented from the beginning to ver. 6. ; then follows an address to the Jews : “ Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts ; I am the first, and I am the last ; and besides me there is no god. And who is like me that he should call forth this event, and make it known before hand, “ and

“ and dispose it for me, from the time that I
“ appointed the people of the destined age.
“ The things that are now coming and are to
“ come hereafter, let them declare unto us.
“ Fear ye not, neither be ye afraid: have I not
“ declared it unto you from the first? ye have
“ foreshewn it, and ye are my witness. Is
“ there a God besides me? Yea, there is no sure
“ protector. I know not any¹;” ver. 8. After
which there is an address to idolaters, contain-
ing the most acute and forcible arguments against
image-worship which are to be found in the
whole scripture².

But while the church rejoices, and the gospel
spreads, the same tidings fill the blasphemous
king and his adherents, with a horrible con-
sternation and dread, represented in the sixth
vial, Rev. xvi. 12.—16. The reasons of that
consternation, we may easily conceive from the
circumstances already detailed. He was Jealous
of the Jews, that they would lay claim to the
land of his possession, and therefore endeavoured
to exterminate them by a virulent persecu-
tion. He now finds that the effect of the persecu-
tion has been to collect them together, so that
they

(1) I have followed Lowth's translation, as it renders
the sense of the passage more clear.

(2) See likewise chap. xlv. 20.—25. to the close,—
chap. xlvi. 5.—11, 12.

they form a great army ; that they are preserved in the wilderness ; where he expected they would have perished by famine, (though I presume he will not allow their preservation to be the consequence of a Divine interposition) ; that they are infected with the Protestant heresy, as he will term it, so fatal to his empire in Europe. He must consider these concurring circumstances, as menacing the existence of his government and religion. He therefore dispatches his emissaries to every prince and potentate on earth, from whom he can expect any support, in order to make their united and last effort in a religious war. “ I saw three unclean spirits like “ frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, “ and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of “ the mouth of the false prophet. For they are “ the spirits of devils, working miracles, which “ go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of “ the whole world, to gather them to the battle “ of that great day of God Almighty ; ” Rev. xvi. 13, 14. Here is a triumvirate, united to resist the converted Jews. The dragon, Satan in his proper colours. The beast, the head of spiritual Babylon, now resident in Judea. The false prophet, the Popish clergy'. As the dragon

gave

(1) So exactly do the prophecies agree, that we find the same triumvirate mentioned, by Isaiah chap. xxvii. 1.

“ In

gave authority at first to the beast, and governed all along unseen by his means, so now he appears openly as his supporter. As Popery was all along Paganism, varnished over with an appearance of Christianity, so now the Pagan powers avowedly support the Popish party, in resisting the converted Jews.

The emissaries of this triumvirate go forth to the kings of the earth, to procure their support for the beast, in his last extremity. And they are sordid, loquacious, and amphibious, like frogs. They use the meanest shifts to form alliances, croak portentuous ills to mankind, arising from the dominion of the Jews, and suit their

“ In that day the Lord, with his sore and great, and strong sword, shall punish Leviathan the piercing serpent, even (and) Leviathan that crooked serpent ; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.” Our translators seemed to have considered the names here mentioned, as belonging to one enemy, or at most to two ; but whoever reads the passage in the original, will immediately perceive that three distinct enemies are pointed out. Accordingly Lowth so understands it in his translation. The time of their punishment is after the conversion of the Jews, mentioned Isaiah xxvi. 12, 13. The two Leviathans are described by characters that suit the first and second beasts in the Apocalypse. The character of the first is pride and tyranny ; that of the second, subtilty and cunning. The second beast is the same with the false prophet. The dragon retains the name and character in both passages.

their arguments to the peculiar circumstances and dispositions of those whom they address.

These are perilous times ; an exhortation is therefore inserted, intimating the suddenness of the judgments which shall overtake these enemies of the truth, and cautioning Christ's faithful followers from being led away by the delusion. “Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame ;” Rev. xvi. 15.

The delusion spread by the Popish emissaries is so great, that the kings of the earth are persuaded to enter into a league, and bring together their combined forces, in order to support the beast and resist the Jews. “And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon ;” Rev. xvi. 16.

CHAPTER V.

Of the Battle of Armageddon.

THE battle fought at Armageddon is so decisive for the interest of religion, that it is largely described by the ancient prophets. I shall therefore take the benefit of their united light, to discover—the place of the battle,—the parties engaged,—the manner of the event,—and the consequences of the victory obtained.

SECTION I.

The Place of the Battle is near Jerusalem.

THAT the place of Armageddon, or mountain of destruction, is Judea, we might infer from the residence of the beast in Judea, previous to the battle, and his collecting allies for a defensive war. It is most natural to suppose, that he will make his last stand in the country where he resides. But waving this, his destruction in Judea, is clearly asserted in the following passages of scripture : “ The Lord of “ hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have “ thought,

“ thought, so shall it come to pass ; and as I
“ have purposed, so shall it stand ; that I will
“ break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my
“ mountains tread him under foot : then shall
“ his yoke depart from off them, and his bur-
“ den depart from off their shoulders. This is
“ the purpose that is purposed upon the whole
“ earth ; and this is the hand that is stretched
“ out upon all the nations. For the Lord of
“ hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul
“ it ? and his hand is stretched out, and who
“ shall turn it back ?” Isa. xiv. 24.—27. The
Assyrian can be no other than the king of Ba-
bylon, mentioned in the preceding part of the
chapter, and the king of ancient Babylon can-
not be intended, because no such event took
place, as his destruction in the land of Israel.
But as the name is elsewhere bestowed on the
head of spiritual Babylon, so the character here
given fitly agrees to him ; ver. 13.—15. This
destruction takes place at the time the Jews are
restored to the favour of God and their own
land ; but the description of that restoration can
by no means apply to the return from Babylon ;
ver. 1.—3. The yoke of this Assyrian laid on the
Jews shall then depart from off them ; ver. 25.
“ The whole earth,” “ all nations,” inimical to
the true religion, shall be punished together with
the Assyrian ; ver. 26. exactly corresponding
with

with the Apocalypse, which represents the destruction of the kings of the earth, and their armies, together with the beast at Armageddon. But this destruction takes place “in the land “of Israel, and on the mountains of Judea;” ver. 25. Therefore Judea is Armageddon.

“ Through the voice of the Lord shall the “ Affyrian be beaten down, which smote with “ a rod.—For Tophet is ordained of old: yea, “ for the king it is prepared: he hath made it “ deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and “ much wood: the breath of the Lord, like a “ stream of brimstone, doth kindle it;” Isa. xxx.

31.—33. Here the same Affyrian mentioned formerly is introduced, for he is said to be “ beaten down” at the time the Jews are restored to their land, and enjoy the blessings of the Millennium, largely described ver. 18.—26. Again, the manner of his destruction corresponds with the representation given of it in the Apocalypse, chap. xix. 20. “ The beast was taken, “ and with him the false prophet.—These both “ were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with “ brimstone.” But the place where he is beaten down is Tophet, or the valley of the son of Hin-nom, which lies to the east of Jerusalem. “ Then “ shall the Affyrian fall with the sword, not of a “ mighty man; and the sword, not of a mean “ man, shall devour him: but he shall flee from “ the

“ the sword, and his young men shall be dis-
“ comfited. And he shall pass over to his strong
“ hold for fear, and his princes shall be afraid
“ of the ensign, saith the Lord, whose fire is in
“ Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem ;” Isa. xxxi.
8, 9. This prophecy may have a double mean-
ing. Every word of it is applicable to Senna-
cherib. His army fell by the sword of the
angel, not therefore by the sword of a mighty
or a mean man. He fled from the sword, and
his army was discomfited. He passed over to
Nineveh, his strong hold, for fear, and his prin-
ces or captains hastened out of the land of Ju-
dea, for fear of that God whose residence was
in Zion, and whom they experienced to be a
consuming fire to his enemies.

But the prophecy, as appears from the con-
nection, points likewise to the fall of the blas-
phemous king, so often termed the Assyrian, and
the expressions are so happily chosen, that every
word is applicable to his case. The power and
interposition of the Deity, shall be conspicuous
in his fall ; but previous to that he shall flee
for fear of the sword of the Jews, to Jerusalem
his strong hold, the armies that support him
shall be discomfited. He and the kings of the
earth shall be consumed at Jerusalem, as in a
furnace, by fire from heaven. The representa-
tion here as to the place and manner of his
fall

fall, accords with that in the passage quoted immediately before.

“ Let the heathen be wakened, and come up
“ to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will
“ I sit to judge all the heathen round about;”
Joel iii. 12. From ver. 9. to 18. we have an
animated description of the battle of Armageddon;
for the expressions of it are quoted
and applied to that event, Rev. xiv. 14.—20.
In the preceding context, we have an account
of the persecution carried on by the blasphemous
king previous to the battle, as I have already
observed, and in the following context,
there is a description of the Millennium, according
to the order of events laid down in the
Apocalypse; so that the battle of Armageddon
must be intended; but the place of that battle
is the valley of Jehoshaphat, which is a continuation
of the valley of Tophet, or the son of
Hinnom, lying to the east of Jerusalem, through
which the brook of Kedron runs.

“ Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of
“ trembling unto all the people round about,
“ when they shall be in the siege both against
“ Judah and against Jerusalem;” Zech xii. 2.
The word translated *against*, signifies *concerning*,
and is rendered *for*, as often as *against*. It is
so translated in the verse immediately preceding,
“ *for* Israel.” It ought to be so rendered in this
verse,

verse, and the whole passage would run thus :
“ The burden of the word of JEHOVAH for Isra-
“ el. JEHOVAH saith, who stretcheth forth the
“ heavens, and layeth the foundations of the
“ earth, and formeth the spirit of man within
“ him, Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of
“ trembling unto all the people round about.
“ (It shall be also for Judah, in the siege for
“ Jerusalem).” The last words intimate, that
the prophecy concerns Judah as well as Israel,
and that it shall be accomplished at Jerusalem,
in a siege for that city. Now, the prophecy re-
presents a signal interposition of the Deity for
the destruction of their enemies, which can be
no other than the battle of Armageddon ; for
the time is fixed by the circumstances of the
narration. It is in that day when “ all the peo-
“ ple of the earth are gathered together (against)
“ it,” (Zech. xii. 3.) or (for) it. It is the oc-
cation of their gathering ; when the Jews are
the instruments in the hand of God, to punish
their enemies. “ I will make the governors
“ (leaders) of Judah like a hearth of fire among
“ the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf ;
“ and they shall devour all the people round
“ about, on the right hand, and on the left ;”
Zech. xii. 6. When they shall be restored to
the possession of the land given their fathers,
“ Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own
“ place,

“ place, even in Jerusalem;” Zech. xii. 6. In a word, about the time they are converted to the faith of the Saviour whom their fathers crucified; Zech. xii. 10.—14. These circumstances apply fully and only to the battle of Armageddon. If so, the place of the battle is near Jerusalem, the occasion a siege of that city by the Jews, while it is defended by the combined forces of the kings of the earth, and their armies.

SECTION II.

The Parties are, on the one side the Papal Power, assisted by the Kings of the Earth and their Armies; on the other Side, the converted Jews.

THESE are in general the parties. They are stated on the one side by the Prophet Isaiah, chap. xxiv. 21. “ And it shall come to pass in “ that day, that the Lord shall punish the host “ of the high ones that are on high, and the “ kings of the earth upon the earth.” The “ high ones” are Satan and his host, “ wicked “ spirits that dwell in high places;” for, after the battle of Armageddon, Satan is bound 1000 years, Rev. xx. ; at the end of that period he is loosed, and stirs up enemies of a similar spirit with the kings vanquished at Armageddon; and so it

is said here, Isa. xxiv. 22. "They shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited" that is "loosed." They are mentioned by Zephaniah, chap. iii. 8. "My determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." By Zechariah, chap. xii. 3. "And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: All that burden themselves with it, shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it." Both parties are stated by Joel, chap. iii. 11. "Assemble yourselves, and come all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: Thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord."

By the kings of the earth we are to understand the Popish and Pagan powers. And we must reckon them fewer than the expression would at first indicate, when we reflect that the seventh trumpet sounded about 70 years before the battle of Armageddon, and that the gospel was mightily prevailing during all that period, in the western regions of the world; and that it is by no means probable the Protestant churches, who have all along looked and prayed for the conversion of the Jews, should, upon their conversion,

version, join issue with their enemies, and resist them.

If we enquire more particularly who these kings and nations are that come to Armageddon, to support the beast, we shall find an exact list of them, Jer. xxv. 15.—23. But in regard the most approved commentators apply that passage to the conquests of Nebuchadnezzar, it will be necessary to remove the prejudice arising from their interpretation. The prophets are the best interpreters of the prophets. It is by comparing scripture with scripture that we arrive at its genuine meaning. There are so many circumstances in the narration, corresponding exactly with the description of the battle of Armageddon in other passages, that the concurrence of the whole affords a sufficient proof that the same battle is here intended. Besides, many of these circumstances cannot in their literal meaning apply to the conquests of Nebuchadnezzar.

The punishment inflicted is called “the wine-cup of God’s fury,” ver. 15. The same expressions are used, Isa. li. 22, 23. and Zech. xii. 2. and refer as we have already seen, to Armageddon. In consequence of this punishment, it is said, that they “shall fall, and rise no more” ver. 27. So Armageddon is called “the valley of decision,” Joel iii. 14. because

cause immediately after it the kingdom of Christ is established in the world. It is represented as a divine interposition for God's holy habitation. "The Lord shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation; he shall mightily roar upon (for) his habitation," Jer. xxv. 30. So it is said of Armageddon, "Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, he will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the noise of them: so shall the Lord of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof," Isa. xxxi. 4. This surely cannot apply to the conquests of Nebuchadnezzar. It is called a wine-prefs: "He shall give a shout, as they that tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth," Jer. xxv. 30. a metaphor used to represent Armageddon, Rev. xiv. 20. and xix. 15. "He will plead with all flesh," Jer. xxv. 31. so Isa. lxvi. 16. and Joel iii. 2. He will give them that are wicked to the sword." Ver. 31. can only apply to Armageddon, where all the enemies of religion are cut off: "Evil shall go forth from nation to nation." Ver. 32. fitly represents the emissaries mentioned Rev. xvi. 13. "The slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth (land) even unto the other end of the earth

“ earth (land),” Jer. xxv. 33. exactly accords with the extent of the wine-press, Rev. xiv. 20.” for the land of Judea, according to Jerom, is just a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

The nations therefore that drink the cup of God’s fury, in consequence of assisting the beast, are the following :

“ Pharaoh king of Egypt, and his servants, and “ his princes, and all his people ;” Jer. xxv. 19. “ And all the mingled people ;” ver 20. The word in the original is the same that is translated Arabia, ver. 24. though differently pointed, which makes no material difference, most likely they are such as inhabit the coasts of the Red Sea. “ And all the kings of the land of “ Uz,” ver. 20. There are three persons so named in scripture, the son of Aram, whom Bocchart supposes to have settled in Syria, the son of Nahor, who settled in Arabia Deserta, and probably is intended here, and a son of Esau. “ And all the kings of the land of the “ Philistines, and Ashkelon and Azzah, and E- “ kron and Ashdod, Edom and Moab, and the “ children of Ammon, and all the kings of “ Tyrus, and all the kings of Zidon, and the “ kings of the isles which are beyond the sea, (the “ coasts of the Mediterranean), Dedan, and Te- “ ma, and Buz, (districts of Arabia), and all that “ are in the utmost corners, (probably nations in- “ habit ing

“ habitng betwixt the Euxine and Caspian seas),
“ and all the kings of Arabia, and all the
“ kings of the mingled people that dwell in the
“ desert, (Arabia Deserta), and all the kings of
“ Zimri, (a people of Arabia descended from
“ Zimram, Abraham’s son by Keturah), and
“ all the kings of Elam, (Persia), and all the
“ kings of the Medes, and all the kings of the
“ north, (Syria and Affyria), far and near,
“ (such as immediately border on the land, and
“ such as are at a considerable distance), and all
“ the kingdoms of the world, which are upon
“ the face of the earth, (all the kingdoms of a
“ worldly or earthly spirit in whatever place):
“ and the kings of Shehach shall drink after
“ them;” Jer. xxv. 20.—26. By Shehach is
intended the king of Babylon, chap. li. 41.
meaning there as well as here the head of the
system of spiritual Babylon, in other words, the
beast whom they endeavoured to support¹. By
this list forces are sent up from the following di-
stricts of country, bordering upon each other,
though widely extended, Egypt, Arabia, the
country situate betwixt Arabia and Palestine, for-
merly possessed by the Edomites, Moabites, and
Ammonites, all Palestine, Syria, and the district of
country

(1) Shehach may signify one punished sixfold, or one drawn with a hook or fork of six prongs, *i. e.* one signally punished, which is obviously applicable to the head of spiritual Babylon.

country lying eastward, as far as Affyria, the great kingdom of Persia, probably the country betwixt the Euxine and Caspian seas. Several different names are given to the inhabitants of the same country, as to the Arabians, eight names; Arabia the mingled people, twice, Uz, Dedan, Tema, Buz, Zimri; to the inhabitants of Palestine, eight, the Philistines, Ashkelon, Azzah, Ekron, Ashdod, Tyrus, Zidon, the isles or coasts of the Mediterranean, to intimate, I presume, that they are conducted by so many different leaders, and constitute so many distinct corps, independent of each other, which accounts in some measure for the diversity of sentiment so fatal to their expedition, as we shall afterwards see.

Another list of the kings of the earth and their armies who support the beast at Armageddon, is given, Ezek. xxxii. 17.—32. But whereas the former may be considered as a muster-roll of the forces before the battle, the latter may be reckoned an account of the slain after the battle. In Jeremiah they are mentioned by corps, in Ezekiel by nations. Some mentioned in the first, as the Arabians, are wholly omitted in the last. Perhaps they withdrew their forces when divisions broke out among the combined powers, and so escaped the general slaughter. Making allowance for the difference occasioned by these circumstances,

circumstances, the two lists are precisely the same. For here we have mention of Assyria, ver. 22. the same with "the utmost corner," called "the kingdom of the north afar off, " Elam or Persia," ver. 24. "Meshech and Tubal," ver. 26. the inhabitants of the country betwixt the Euxine and Caspian seas, "Edom," ver. 29. including not only Idumea, but likewise the country of the Moabites and Ammonites, "the princes of the north," ver. 30. of Syria and the neighbourhood, "all the Zidonians," ver. 30. the inhabitants of Palestine, together with "the multitude of Egypt," ver. 18. As Antichrist, or the beast whom they support, was in the former list termed Sheleshach the king of Babylon, so, in the latter, he is called Pharaoh king of Egypt.

My reasons for supposing that the nations mentioned here are those slaughtered at Armageddon, I shall lay before the reader, leaving them to his judgment.

The Church of Rome is in the Apocalypse, called Egypt, xi. 8. as well as Babylon, consequently the head of that community may be termed the king of Egypt. As Pharaoh was the first noted oppressor of the people of God, so Antichrist is the last, immediately before the kingdom of Christ is established in the world. Now, the nations mentioned here are called "the

“ the multitude of Egypt,” Ezek. xxxii. 18. and “ the multitude of Pharaoh,” ver. 31. to intimate that they are slaughtered as allies of the king of Egypt. The connection with the context must direct the attentive reader to the battle of Armageddon. The spirit of prophecy has the latter times in view in the thirty-first and thirty-second chapters throughout. They contain three distinct sections of prophecy. The first (including the whole of the thirty-first chapter) is a description of Antichrist under the name of Pharaoh, representing the prominent features of his character, his pride and arrogance, illustrating these by an artful comparison with the king of **Affyria**, another type of the same Antichrist. The second section (ch. xxxii. 1.—16.) represents the final ruin of Antichrist, under the same name of Pharaoh. Now his ruin, as we learn from the Apocalypse, takes place at Armageddon, consequently the slaughter described can be no other than the battle of Armageddon. The third section, (chap. xxxii. 17.—32.), is a more minute detail of the same event, mentioning the nations whose ruin shall be involved in his fall ; consequently, they are the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to Armageddon to support him. The circumstances of the narrative shew, that the spirit of prophecy has Armageddon in view, as, “ I will also

“ water with thy blood the land wherein thou
“ swimmest, even to the mountains,” ver. 6. is a
metaphor similar to that used, Rev. xiv. 20. in de-
scribing the wine-pres; “ And blood came out of
“ the wine-pres even unto the horse bridles.”—
“ And when I shall put thee out, I will cover
“ the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark;
“ I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the
“ moon shall not give her light. All the bright
“ lights of heaven will I make dark over thee,”
ver. 7, 8. Darkening or extinguishing the lights
of heaven, a metaphor signifying the downfall
of states and kingdoms, is more frequently ap-
plied to the overturn of the kingdom of Satan
by the battle of Armageddon, than to any other
event. It is the sole event in view, Isa. xiii. 10.
chap. xxxiv. 4. chap. xxiv. 23. Joel iii. 15.
“ I will also vex the hearts of many people,
“ when I shall bring thy destruction among the
“ nations,” Ezek. xxxii. 9. The vexation of his
followers in Europe, occasioned by the destruction
of Rome, Rev. xviii. 10. 15. shall be given to his
adherents in Asia and Africa, by the battle of
Armageddon. “ I will make many people a-
“ mazed at thee, and their kings shall be hor-
“ ribly afraid for thee, when I shall brandish my
“ sword before them; and they shall tremble at
“ every moment; every man for his own life, in
“ the day of thy fall,” Ezek. xxxii. 10. As the de-
struction

struction of Pharaoh in the Red Sea, struck with terror the inhabitants of Canaan ; so the fall of Antichrist at Armageddon, shall dispirit the supporters of the kingdom of darkness, throughout the earth.—“ I will destroy all the beasts there—“ of, from besides the great waters ; neither “ shall the foot of man trouble them any more, “ nor the hoofs of beasts trouble them,” ver. 13.

The ordinances of divine appointment, conveying grace like a copious stream, shall be set free from the machinations of Antichristianism, by which they were fouled and troubled. “ Then will I make their waters deep, and “ cause their rivers to run like oil,” ver. 14. That fulness of grace, accompanied by outward peace and prosperity, which God will bestow at the Millennium, is fitly compared to a copious stream, gliding smoothly along like oil ; so, Joel iii. 18. These circumstances fix the time of the prophecy to that immediately preceding the Millennium ; consequently, the battle of Armageddon is intended. The address to Pharaoh, ver. 21. is the very same with the address to the king of Babylon, Isaiah xiv. 9. where the king of mystical Babylon is intended. His allies are all along said to be uncircumcised, to intimate, that irreligion is the cause of their destruction¹.

It

(1) Isa. xiv. 31. *Natham pro Nahmam*, shall be inflamed, that is, with the desire to gather them. See Isa. lvii. 5.

It is worthy of remark, that the countries from which forces are led to Armageddon, to assist the beast, are those over which he has a spiritual jurisdiction⁽¹⁾; with the addition of Persia, Assyria, Meshech, and Tubal, or the country betwixt the Euxine and Caspian seas. These last, are either Mahometan or Pagan, and most probably will continue so until the battle of Armageddon. By joining their forces to the Popish powers, the dragon appears in his proper colours, giving aid to the beast in his last effort.

The parties on the other side in the battle of Armageddon, are the Jews. “Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel:—Behold, “I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: Thou shalt thresh “the mountains, and beat them small, and “shall make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan “them, and the wind shall carry them away, “and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and “thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shall “glory in the holy One of Israel” Isa. xli. 14, 15, 16. “Thou art my battle-ax, and “weapons of war: for with thee will I break “in pieces the nations, and with thee will I “destroy kingdoms: and with thee will I “break in pieces the horse and his rider; and “with thee will I break in pieces the chariot “and his rider:—And with thee, will I break “in

(1) See page 341.

“ in pieces captains and rulers. And I will
“ render unto Babylon, and to all the inhabi-
“ tants of Chaldea, all their evil that they have
“ done in Zion, in your sight, saith the Lord ;”
Jer. li. 20.—24. “ And the house of Jacob
“ shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a
“ flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and
“ they shall kindle in them, and devour them ; and
“ there shall not be any remaining of the house
“ of Esau ; for the Lord hath spoken it ;” Oba-
diah, ver. 18. “ I will surely assemble, O Jacob,
“ all of thee : I will surely gather the remnant
“ of Israel, I will put them together as the
“ sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of
“ their fold : They shall make great noise by
“ reason of the multitude of men. The break-
“ er is come up before them : They have bro-
“ ken up, and have passed through the gate,
“ and are gone out by it, and their king shall
“ pass before them, and the Lord on the head
“ of them ;” Micah ii. 12, 13. “ Now also
“ many nations are gathered against thee, that
“ say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye
“ look upon Zion. But they know not the
“ thoughts of the Lord, neither understand
“ they his counsel : for he shall gather them as
“ the sheaves into the floor. Arise and thresh,
“ O daughter of Zion : for I will make thine
“ horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass,
“ and

“ and thou shall beat in pieces many people :
“ and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord,
“ and their substance unto the Lord of the
“ whole earth,” Micah iv. 11, 12, 13. “ And
“ the remnant of Jacob shall be among the
“ Gentiles in the midst of many people, as a
“ lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young
“ lion among the flocks of sheep : who, if he go
“ through, both treadeth down, and teareth in
“ pieces, and none can deliver. Thine hand
“ shall be lift up upon thine adversaries, and
“ all thine enemies shall be cut off,” Micah v.
8, 9. “ Mine anger was kindled against the
shepherds, and I punished the goats : for the
“ Lord of host hath visited his flock in the house
“ of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly
“ horse in the battle,” Zech. x. 3. “ In that
“ day will I make the governors of Judah like
“ a hearth of fire among the wood, and like a
“ torch of fire in a sheaf ; and they shall de-
“ vour all the people round about, on the right
“ hand and on the left : and Jerusalem shall be
“ inhabited again, in her own place, even in Je-
“ rusalem ; chap. xii. 6. “ And Judah also
“ shall fight at Jerusalem ; and the wealth of
“ all the heathen round about shall be gathered
“ together, gold, and silver, and apparel in
“ great abundance ;” chap. xiv. 14.

SECTION III.

The circumstances of the Battle, issuing in a glorious Victory for the Jews.

THE same light of truth which discovers the parties, reveals likewise the manner of the battle of Armageddon.

After the Jews are trained forty years in the wilderness of Assyria, from the date of their conversion, under the immediate eye of God: After the kings of the earth, deluded by Popish emissaries, during the same period, are induced at length to bring their armies into Judea, to resist them; the Jews by a mandate from heaven under the conduct of the Messiah, march up to take possession of the land given by promise to their fathers. “And there shall be an high-way for the remnant of his people, which shall be left from Assyria, like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt;” Isa. xi. 16.

So solemn an occasion, will readily bring to their recollection the dealings of God with their nation in time past, and certain circumstances in his dealings, will as readily excite fears for the future. Those fears, and the manner in which God removes them, are laid before us, Isa. liv. 4.—17. to close.

It will be natural for them to reflect, now that they are about to possess the land, that they ~~were~~ put in possession of it twice before, and were as often expelled out of it, while the last ~~expulsion~~ was far more severe than the first ; hence the dread of being ejected a third time, with still greater severity, damps their joy, and overwhelms their spirits. To remove this fear, God addresses them : “ Fear not ; for thou “ shalt not be ashamed : neither be thou con- “ founded ; for thou shalt not be put to shame : “ for thou shalt forget the shame of thy “ youth, and shalt not remember the reproach “ of thy widowhood any more. For thy Ma- “ ker is thine husband ; the Lord of hosts is “ his name : and thy Redeemer the holy One “ of Israel ; the God of the whole earth shall “ he be called. For the Lord hath called thee “ as a woman forsaken, and grieved in spirit, “ and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, “ saith thy God. For a small moment have I “ forsaken thee ; but with great mercies will “ I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face “ from thee for a moment ; but with everlast- “ ing kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith “ the Lord thy Redeemer. For this is as the “ waters of Noah unto me : for as I have sworn “ that the waters of Noah should no more go “ over the earth ; so have I sworn that I would “ not

“ not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.
“ For the mountains shall depart, and the hills
“ be removed; but my kindness shall not de-
“ part from thee, neither shall the covenant of
“ my peace be removed, saith the Lord that
“ hath mercy on thee;” Isa. liv. 4.—10.

After intimations of the warmest love, compared to that of a husband for the wife of his youth, the object of his first and strongest affection, he assures them, that as he formerly swore to Noah, and pledged himself to his posterity, filled with the dread of a second deluge, that no such event should ever take place to dispossess them of the earth; so now he solemnly swears that he never will be wroth with them, nor rebuke them, by disinheriting them of the land they are about to possess. So long as the earth endures, they shall remain in it, and when time shall be no more, they shall experience his loving-kindness in a heavenly country, throughout the ages of eternity. It will readily occur to them, that ease and prosperity corrupted their fathers. The submission they learned by a course of discipline in the wilderness, was changed into disobedience, upon their possession of the land; “ Jeshurun waxed fat
“ and kicked.”

The humility they acquired by their captivity in Babylon, was some time after their return,

lost in Pharisaical pride, and many other degrees of wickedness ; it is therefore natural that they should feel an apprehension that they or their posterity may again fall away from their allegiance to the Deity, and relapse into irreligion and profaneness. The solitary wilderness, with the favour of God, appears preferable to a land abounding with outward delights, where they are in danger of provoking him to anger. To comfort them under this apprehension, God says, “ Oh thou afflicted, “ tossed with tempest, and not comforted ! be-“ hold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, “ and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And “ I will make thy windows of agates, and thy “ gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of “ pleasant stones. And all thy children shall “ be taught of the Lord ; and great shall be “ the peace of thy children. In righteousness “ shalt thou be established : thou shalt be far “ from oppression ; for thou shalt not fear : and “ from terror ; for it shall not come near thee ;” Isa. liv. 11.—14.

God promises, that for their preservation, he will form a national establishment, civil and religious, as far superior to any formerly known, as a city built of precious stones excels the most finished specimen of human architecture. He farther promises special grace to every individual, and in consequence peace to the community ;

nity; that prevailing righteousness shall secure them from internal oppressions, and not only from the attacks, but from the fear of external enemies. Another ground of fear is, the formidable force collected in Judea to resist them. To remove this, God says, “Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee, shall fall for thy sake. Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn;” Isa. liv. 15, 16, 17. He intimates, that the forces, of which they heard a report, would gather together to resist them, but at the same time promises a victory over them. To establish their faith in this promise, he reminds them, that men, their weapons, their counsels, the success of their counsels, are all at his disposal, and again assures them, that neither the weapons, nor the more dangerous calumnies of their enemies, by which they deluded the world to oppose them, should prevail to their hurt.

Their fears being removed, they are represented as addressing themselves to God by a solemn prayer. The sum of it is laid before

us, Isa. lxiii. 15. to the end, and in chap. lxiv. The Jews, after this, march up to Judea; and it does not appear, from any passage that has occurred to me, that their enemies attempt to resist them till they arrive at Jerusalem. There the beast and his allies make their stand. Their numbers and eagerness are represented by Joel, chap. iii. 9. 11. 14. “ Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your plow-shares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears; let the weak say, ‘I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about.—Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat.—Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down, for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great; Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision.” On the other hand, the solemn and majestic movement of the Jewish armies, advancing to certain victory under the conduct of the Messiah, is represented to the Apostle John. “ I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called faithful and true; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns, and he had a name written that no man

“ man knew but he himself. And he was
“ clothed with a vesture dipt in blood ; and his
“ name is called, The Word of God. And the
“ armies which were in heaven followed him
“ upon white horses, cloathed in fine linen,
“ white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth
“ a sharp sword, that with it he should smite
“ the nations, and he shall rule them with a
“ rod of iron : And he treadeth the wine-pres
“ of the fiercenes and wrath of Almighty God.
“ And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh
“ a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD
“ OF LORDS.—And I saw the beast and the kings
“ of the earth, and their armies gathered toge-
“ ther, to make war against him that sat on the
“ horse, and against his army.” Rev. xix.

11.—16. 19.

Before they join battle, the seventh angel pours out his vial into the air, Rev. xvi. 17. The effect of this is, to dispel the delusion occasioned by the “ prince of the power of the air,” which collected such numerous forces together. The motley crew who assist the beast, set free from the delusion which gathered them, give place to the animosities naturally arising from their various forms of government and systems of religion, as well as from their ancient feuds and quarrels. They now turn their swords with eagerness against each other, as formerly the

children

children of Moab, Ammon, and Mount Seir in the days of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xx. 23. This is clearly asserted by the prophet Zechariah, chap. xiv. 13. “it shall come to pass in that “day, that a great tumult from the Lord shall “be among them, and they shall lay hold every “one on the hand of his neighbour, and his “hand shall rise up against the hand of his “neighbour.” So God says by Haggai, chap. ii. 21.—24. “I will shake the heavens and the “earth, and I will overthrow the throne of “kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of “the kingdoms of the heathen, and I will “overthrow the chariots and those that ride in “them, and the horses and their riders shall “come down, every one *by the sword of his brother.*” Their eagerness to destroy each other is compared to that of a drunkard for guzzling the wine most agreeable to his palate, “I will “feed them that oppress thee with their own “flesh, and they shall be drunken with their “own blood as with sweet wine.” Isa. xlix. 26.

Together with their own swords, God shall set the elements in battle array against them, so as to render his interposition obvious in their destruction. “Behold the Name of the Lord “cometh from far, burning with his anger, and “the burden thereof is heavy: His lips are full “of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring “fire;

“ fire ; and his breath as an overflowing stream,
“ shall reach to the midst of the neck.—And
“ the Lord shall cause his glorious voice (thun-
“ der) to be heard, and shall shew the lightning
“ down of his arm, with the indignation of his
“ anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire,
“ (lightning), with scattering, and tempest, and
“ hail-stones.—For Tophet is ordained of old ;
“ yea, for the king it is prepared ; he hath made
“ it deep and large ; the pile thereof is fire and
“ much wood ; the breath of the Lord, like a
“ stream of brimstone doth kindle it.” Isa. xxx.

27, 28. 30. 33. “ For behold, the Lord will
“ come with fire, and with his chariots like a
“ whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and
“ his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire,
“ and by his sword, will the Lord plead with all
“ flesh ; and the slain of the Lord shall be many,”
chap. lxvi. 15, 16. “ God came from Teman,
“ and the holy One from mount Paran. His
“ glory covered the heavens, and the earth was
“ full of his praise, and his brightness was as
“ the light, he had horns coming out of his
“ hand, and there was the hiding of his power.
“ Before him went the pestilence, and burn-
“ ing coals went forth at his feet.—Thou didst
“ march through the land in indignation, thou
“ didst thresh the heathen in anger. Thou
“ wentest forth for the salvation of thy people,
“ even

“even for salvation with thine anointed;”
Habak. iii. 3, 4, 5. 12, 13¹.

The Jews are then described as descending to the valley of Jehoshaphat, to complete the victory which the swords of their enemies, and the fire of the elements had already obtained for them. “And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem;” Zech. xiv. 14².

The remains of those forces once so formidable, now scatter in various directions, and endeavour severally to gain their own countries, (Isa. xiii. 14. Jer. l. 16.); but the Jews pursue and make an immense slaughter all over the land of Palestine. This is that wine-press out of which came “blood even unto the horse-bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs³;” Rev. xiv. 20.

The complete destruction of the enemies of religion at Armageddon, is laid before us in various passages. Take the following as a specimen: “And the destruction of the transgressors
“ and

(1) See likewise Isa. lxiii. 1.—5, 6, and Rev. xiv. 17.—20. to close.

(2) See the texts quoted, p. 348. and downwards.

(3) For the holy land, according to Jerom, measures in length 200 Roman or 160 Grecian miles. The Romans computed eight furlongs to a mile, but the Greeks allowed ten, so that by either computation the extent is just 1600 furlongs; see Mede’s *Clavis Apocalyptic*.

“ and of the sinners shall be together, and they
“ that forsake the Lord shall be consumed.—
“ And the strong shall be as tow, and the ma-
“ ker of it as a spark, and they shall both burn
“ together, and none shall quench them ;” Isa. i.
28. 31. “ Wo to the multitude of many people,
“ which make a noise like the noise of the seas ;
“ and to the rushing of nations, that make a
“ rushing like the rushing of mighty waters !
“ The nations shall rush like the rushing of
“ many waters : but God shall rebuke them, and
“ they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the
“ chaff of the mountains before the wind, and
“ like a rolling thing before the whirlwind.
“ And, behold, at evening-tide trouble ; and
“ before the morning he is not. This is the
“ portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of
“ them that rob us ;” Isa. xvii. 12.—14.
“ Behold, the whirlwind of the Lord goeth
“ forth with fury, a continuing whirlwind ;
“ it shall fall with pain upon the head of the
“ wicked.

(1) The chaff of the summer threshing-floor is the figure used, Dan. ii. 35. to signify the destruction of the enemies of religion, immediately before the kingdom of Christ, or the Millennium commences. Here too the circumstances fix the time, “at evening-tide,” towards the close of the long calamitous day of their dispersion, there shall be trouble arising from the persecution of the blasphemous king, and before the morning of the first resurrection, or Millennium, he their oppressor ceases to exist.

“ wicked. The fierce anger of the Lord shall
“ not return, until he have done it, and until
“ he have performed the intents of his heart :
“ in the latter days ye shall consider it ;” Jer.
xxx. 23, 24. “ Say to the forest of the south¹,
“ Hear the word of the Lord, Thus saith the
“ Lord God, Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee,
“ and it shall devour every green tree in thee,
“ and every dry tree : the flaming flame shall
“ not be quenched, and all faces from the south
“ to the north shall be burnt therein. And all
“ flesh shall see that I the Lord have kindled
“ it : it shall not be quenched ;” Ezek. xx.
47, 48.

C H A P-

(1) Armageddon or Judea may be called the Forest of the South, because at the time the kings of the earth and their armies are gathered together there, the Jews, to whom the prophecy is directed, lie to the north of them, in the wilderness of Assyria.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the Events that take place betwixt the Battle of Armageddon and the Millennium.

LET us now see the consequences of the victory obtained at Armageddon, or the events that occur during the five years which intervene betwixt the battle and the commencement of the Millennium.

SECTION I.

Resettlement of the Jews in the Land of Promise.

THE first and immediate effect of this victory is, that the Jews take possession of the land given by promise to their fathers, out of which they had been ejected 2000 years.

It appears from the concurring testimony of the prophets, that they shall be very numerous; for it is at that period God addresses Zion: "Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: "all these gather themselves together, and come "to thee. As I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt "surely clothe thee with them all as with an "ornament,

“ ornament, and bind them on thee as a bride
“ doth. For thy waste and thy desolate places,
“ and the land of thy destruction, shall even
“ now be too narrow by reason of the inhabi-
“ tants, and they that swallowed thee up shall
“ be far away. The children which thou shalt
“ have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say
“ again in thine ears, The place is too strait for
“ me : give place to me that I may dwell, “ Isa.
xlix. 18.—20. “ But ye, O mountains of If-
“ rael, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and
“ yield your fruit to my people Israel ; for they
“ are at hand to come.—And I will multiply
“ men upon you, all the house of Israel, even
“ all of it : and the cities shall be inhabited,
“ and the wastes shall be builded : and I will
“ multiply upon you man and beast ; and they
“ shall increase and bring fruit : and I will set-
“ tle you after your old estates, and will do
“ better unto you than at your beginnings ;
“ and ye shall know that I am the Lord.—As
“ the holy flock as the flock of Jerusalem in
“ her solemn feasts, so shall the waste cities be
“ filled with flocks of men ; and they shall know
“ that I am the Lord,” Ezek. xxxvi. 8. 10. 11.
38. “ Yet the number of the children of Israel
“ shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be
“ measured nor numbered,” Hosea i. 10. “ I
“ will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee ; I
“ will

“ will surely gather the remnant of Israel ; I
“ will put them together as the sheep of Boz-
“ rah, as the flock in the midst of their fold :
“ they shall make great noise by reason of the
“ multitude of men,” Micah ii. 12. “ Run,
“ speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem
“ shall be inhabited as towns without walls for
“ the multitude of men and cattle therein,”
Zech. ii. 4. “ I will bring them again also out
“ of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of
“ Assyria : and I will bring them into the land
“ of Gilead and Lebanon, and place shall not be
“ found for them,” chap. x. 10.

After the battle of Armageddon, the ten tribes of Israel shall possess the land in conjunction with the two tribes. “ In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north, to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers ;” Jer. iii. 18. “ Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land : for great shall be the day of Jezreel ;” Hosea i. 11. “ The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, for Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions : then

“ take

“take another stick, and write upon it, For Jo-
“seph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the
“house of Israel his companions: and join them
“one to another into one stick; and they shall
“become one in thine hand. And when the
“children of thy people shall speak unto thee,
“saying, Wilt thou not shew us what thou
“meanest by these?—Say unto them, Thus
“saith the Lord God, Behold, I will take the
“children of Israel from among the heathen,
“whither they be gone, and will gather them
“on every side, and bring them into their own
“land: and I will make them one nation in
“the land upon the mountains of Israel; and
“one king shall be king to them all: and they
“shall be no more two nations, neither shall
“they be divided into two kingdoms any more
“at all;” Ezek. xxxvii. 15.—19. 21, 22.

In order to fulfil this prophecy, it is not necessary to suppose, with some visionary men, that the ten tribes carried away captive by Salmaneser are still preserved a separate people in some unknown country. There is not much reason to doubt that all of those carried away by him, are blended with the other nations of the world, and lost as a separate people. But several individuals of the ten tribes deserted the land of Israel, when the calves were set up in Dan and Bethel, and lived with their brethren, voluntary

voluntary exiles in the land of Judah, out of regard to the ordinances of religion¹. After the great body of the nation of Israel was carried away captive, many families remained in the land, others took refuge in the land of Judah, as appears from their attending the passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah², after the captivity. The posterity of these were all along, and still are blended with their brethren, under the common name of Jews. It is an easy matter for the Almighty to make them a very numerous people, by the time they go down to Armageddon.

The land of their possession shall be much more extensive than at any former period, including the whole district of the country that lies betwixt the Euphrates and the Mediterranean; so the prophet Micah says, chap. vii. 12. “In that day also he (Israel) shall come even to “thee (Jerusalem) from Affyria, (to the fortified cities, and from Tyre³, shall he extend), “to

(1) See 2 Chron. xi. 13.—18. 2 Chron. xxxi. 6, 7.

(2) See 2 Chron. xxx. 11. 2 Chron. xxxv. 17.

(3) I suppose the fortresses mentioned to be Tyre, because it was once the most famous fortress in Palestine. Besides, its situation is the point of land farthest west on the coast of Palestine, to which we are directed to look, when

“ to the river, and from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain.” The prophet describes the extent of their territory, by marking the breadth of their land from west to east, in two different places. At the north end it shall extend from Tyre to the Euphrates; at the south end from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulph. The length of the land from north to south, shall be from mount Lebanon, which was at all times the northern boundary, to mount Seir, as in the parallel passage. “ They in the south shall possess the mount of Esau ;” Obad. ver. 19.

This is confirmed by Zechariah. “ His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth ;” Zech. ix. 10. The words have a double meaning; they not only represent the Messiah’s kingdom, as extending over all nations, but they likewise describe the territory of the people of Israel, after their submission to the Messiah; while the words are so happily chosen as to suit both events. In the latter sense, the description is the same with that of Micah, their dominion extends

when set in opposition to the Euphrates, as the eastern boundary. The scriptures always mean the Euphrates, when no proper name is added to the river. Besides, the word translated *fortress*, with a small variation, would give the name of Tyre in the original.

tends from the Persian Gulph¹, to the Mediterranean, at the south end, and from the Euphrates to the extremities of the land of Palestine, that is, to the sea-coast at the north end.

The same expressions are used Psalm lxxii. 8. where they have likewise a double meaning. They represent the extent of the Messiah's kingdom, and likewise of Solomon's. Now Solomon reigned over all the kings betwixt the Euphrates and the Mediterranean, 1 Kings iv. 24. which fixes the meaning of the expressions both here and in Zechariah, as far as they relate to the people of Israel.

The division of the land shall be different from that originally made by Joshua. It is minutely described in the 48th chapter of Ezekiel. The inheritance of each tribe shall extend along the breadth of the land, from the east to the west side, so that each tribe shall be possessed of sea-

(1) Many have supposed, that the lake Asphalites, or Dead Sea, is meant; but observe that the kingdom of Solomon extended beyond it, and that the country of the Moabites and Ammonites, which lay to the east of it, is said to be possessed by the children of Israel upon their restoration, (Zeph. ii. 9.), consequently it cannot be intended. Now the next sea to the east is the Persian Gulph, into which the Euphrates falls, therefore being the continuation of the same line, which makes the eastern boundary at the north end, it is most probably intended

sea-coast. Seven of the tribes shall lie to the north of Jerusalem in the following order, beginning at the entrance of Hamath: Dan, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Reuben, Judah; and five to the south, Benjamin, Simeon, Issachar, Zebulon, Gad. The holy portion for the city, described Ezek. xlv. 8.—21. shall lie betwixt the inheritance of Judah and Benjamin, so as not to be reckoned of either¹.

(1) The city and the holy portion may be understood, partly in a literal sense, but chiefly in a mystical, signifying the national polity, like the new Jerusalem. I presume the meaning of it cannot be fully understood, till the Jews receive the model of their national polity, upon their conversion. However, it may have thus far a literal meaning, that a certain portion of land, distinct from the inheritance of the twelve tribes, shall be allotted for a subsistence to persons in public offices, both ecclesiastical and civil; and that in lieu of tithes and taxes, that have been frequently sources of oppression to the people. I build this idea, on the portion allotted to the prince; for which the reason is given, “ My princes shall no more “ oppress my people; and the rest of the land shall they “ give to the house of Israel, according to their tribes.— “ O princes of Israel, take away your exactions from my “ people, saith the Lord God;” Ezek. xlv. 8, 9. Again, it is said of a part of the holy portion, “ It shall be for “ food to them that serve the city,” chap. xlvi. 18.; that is, for a subsistence for public functionaries. Farther, the part allotted to the priests and Levites, may signify a subsistence to the ministers of the gospel.

When the Jews are put in possession of the land given to their fathers, at this period, they shall never be ejected out of it, but shall continue in possession of it while the earth remains. So God explicitly asserts. “Thou shalt no more be termed, Forsaken ; neither shall thy land any more be termed, Desolate : but thou shalt be called “Hephzi-bah, (I have delighted in her), and “thy land Beulah, (married) : for the Lord “delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married ;” Isa. Ixii. 4. “The Lord hath sworn “by his right hand, and by the arm of his “strength, Surely I will no more give thy corn “to be meat for thine enemies ; and the sons “of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for “the which thou hast laboured : but they that “have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the “Lord ; and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of my holiness ;” ver. 8, 9. “And they shall dwell in “the land that I have given unto Jacob my “servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt : “and they shall dwell therein, even they and “their children, and their childrens children, “for ever ; and my servant David shall be their “prince for ever ;” Ezek. xxxvii. 25. “But “Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem “from generation to generation ;” Joel iii. 20.

“ I will plant them upon their land, and they
“ shall no more be pulled up out of their land
“ which I have given them, saith the Lord thy
“ God ;” Amos ix. 15.

SECTION II.

Final extirpation of Popery.

ANOTHER remarkable event, consequent upon the victory at Armageddon, is the final extirpation of Popery, that system of Antichristianism which had continued so long in the world, for the destruction both of the souls and bodies of men.

The horrible consternation of Popish idolaters after the battle of Armageddon, is represented by Isaiah, chap. ii. 10, 11.—18, 19, 20, 21. “ Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the
“ dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory
“ of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall
“ be humbled, and the haughtiness of men
“ shall be bowed down; and the Lord alone
“ shall be exalted in that day.—And the idols
“ he shall utterly abolish. And they shall go
“ into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves
“ of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the
“ glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake
“ terribly

“ terribly the earth. In that day a man shall
“ cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold,
“ which they made each one for himself to wor-
“ ship, to the moles, and to the bats ; to go in-
“ to the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of
“ the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and
“ for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth
“ to shake terribly the earth.”

This consternation in them shall be accompanied by a conviction in others, that the system maintained by them is most offensive to God, and subjects those who adhere to it to the punishment of eternal death. We might infer this from the several texts which intimate the destruction of the beast by fire, as Isa. xxx. 33. chap. xxxi. 9. Dan. vii. 11. ; for all these seem to have an aspect not only to the material fire at Armageddon, but likewise to the torments of hell, so frequently described by fire in scripture.

But the sentiment is explicitly asserted in the following texts. “ And they shall go forth, “ and look upon the carcases of the men that “ have transgressed against me : for their worm “ shall not die, neither shall their fire be “ quenched ; and they shall be an abhorring “ unto all flesh ;” Isa. lxvi. 24.

The transgressors mentioned here are those destroyed at Armageddon ; for their destruction is coeval with the return of the Jews, ver. 20. and

and the Millennium, ver. 21, 22, 23. Their punishment is expressed by a phrase signifying the torments of hell; Mark ix. 44. 46. 48. That punishment is seen in their carcases; that is, a conviction of it is impressed upon the mind, by the manner of their destruction. “And the beast “ was taken, and with him the false prophet “ that wrought miracles before him, with which “ he deceived them that had received the mark, “ of the beast, and them that worshipped his “ image. These both were cast alive into a lake “ of fire burning with brimstone;” Rev. xix. 20. The punishment represented here can be no other than the torments of hell; for they are cast *alive* into the lake, consequently it must be that place where “the worm dieth not, and the fire “ is not quenched;” besides it is the same lake into which “death and hell are cast” after the general resurrection, expressly termed the second death; Rev. xx. 14. The persons so punished are “the beast and false prophet,” in other words, the Pope and the Popish clergy looking not to individuals, but to the head and supporters of the system of Popery. They are said to be taken at Armageddon, because the sinfulness of the system is there fully detected and clearly exposed by the interposition of the Deity in the destruction of its supporters. The same punishment is denounced against all those who

who adhere to the system: “ And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, “ if any man worship the beast and his image, “ and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of “ the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation ; “ and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and “ in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke “ of their torment ascendeth up for ever and “ ever: and they have no rest day nor night “ who worship the beast and his image, and “ whosoever receiveth the mark of his name ; ”

Rev. xiv. 9.—11. The voice of this angel is coeval with the period immediately following the battle of Armageddon¹. This proclamation

(1) Mede, Newton, and some others, suppose the voice of this angel to have been fulfilled by the Reformation; but to this interpretation I cannot agree, for the following reasons: 1. This angel follows after the former two, and the first of them points to a period still future, as we have seen: 2. It is not true, that the reformers denounced eternal damnation against all that remained members of the church of Rome. They spoke of the difficulty of salvation in the church of Rome, but that is a language essentially different from the peremptory declaration of this angel. But we may easily conceive, that at some future period,

when

tion being uttered with a loud voice, intimates a public declaration and general conviction, that adhering to the system of Popery, subjects men to eternal torments.

But notwithstanding this conviction in the members of the true church, such as adhere to the system of Popery, shall make some efforts to maintain its influence, even after the battle of Armageddon; but these efforts shall prove abortive, owing partly to their own divisions, but chiefly to the Jewish arms. We are told, that “the great city¹ was divided into three “parts, and the cities of the nations fell,” Rev. xvi. 19.; that is, the rulers of the system

divided

when the wrath of God shall come on that devoted society to the uttermost, they who adhere to her communion, shall be considered as irreclaimable, and therefore justly consigned to everlasting destruction. This doctrine, which would be considered as uncharitable at the time of the Reformation, or even in the present age, shall then appear perfectly consistent with reason and charity: 3. That the voice of this angel is coeval with the time immediately following the battle of Armageddon, appears from its coinciding in sentiment and expression with other passages, which, without controversy, refer to that period. Compare Rev. xvi. 19. and chap xix. 20.

(1) The city signifies sometimes the seat of the beast, but most frequently, as here, the subjects of his spiritual jurisdiction.

divided into three several parties, which induced the nations who adhered to them, either as members of their communion, or as allies, to withdraw their support.

The nature and cause of these divisions, the event only can explain. But while they are thus divided among themselves, and deserted by their friends and allies, their system, as far as it is visible in the world, is finally destroyed by the arms of the Jews, who conquer the countries over which the blasphemous king had authority, as we shall presently see. They are the instruments in God's hand, "to give unto great Babylon the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath." After all, some shall continue secretly attached to Popery, so forcible is the influence of superstition over the human mind; but these shall be worn out gradually, by the prevailing power of the Gospel of Christ, according to that declaration, "And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth;" Rev. xix. 21.

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SECTION III.

Conquest of the Countries in the neighbourhood of Judea by the Jews.

ANOTHER remarkable event, which takes place betwixt the battle of Armageddon and the Millennium is, the conquest made by the Jews of the several countries over which the blasphemous king had authority. We learn from Rev. xvi. 21. that after the battle of Armageddon, “there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, “every stone about the weight of a talent: And “men blasphemed God because of the plague of “the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding “great.” Hail signifies war, as in the first trumpet; great hail, heavy or grievous war to the party conquered; its coming “out of heaven,” signifies that it proceeds from the church, under the authority and direction of God.

It appears from the prophets, that this war is carried on by the Jews, who, after the victory at Armageddon, lead their victorious army into the several countries in their neighbourhood, from which forces were sent to resist them. They undertake this war, not to gratify ambition or covetousness, but as followers of him, who “in righteousness doth judge and make “war,”

“ war,” to break the power of those who had concerted their destruction, to extirpate superstition, and establish the truth.

The rapidity of their conquests is in general asserted by Isaiah, chap. xi. 14. “ They shall “ fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines to- “ ward the west, they shall spoil them of the “ east together; they shall lay their hands upon “ Edom and Moab, and the children of Am- “ mon shall obey them.” A particular account of the conquest of all Palestine is given, Isa. xiv. 29.—32. to the close. As in the passage quoted immediately before, the Jews are compared to an eagle, so here to a fiery flying serpent darting on his prey. They are said to come from the north, because they march up from Affyria. The effect of their coming is, that “ all Palestine “ is dissolved,” the government is overturned, and the inhabitants are destroyed. Verses 30. 32. are a description of the Millennium; and the conquest foretold being interwoven with that event, shews, that the one immediately precedes the other. We have another account of this conquest, Ezek. xxv. 15.—17. “ Thus saith the “ Lord God, because the Philistines have dealt “ by revenge, and have taken vengeance with a “ despitful heart, to destroy it (the house of Ju- “ dah) for the old hatred; therefore thus saith “ the Lord God, Behold, I will stretch out mine “ hand

“ hand upon the Philistines, and I will cut off
“ the Cherethims, and destroy the remnant of
“ the sea-coast. And I will execute great ven-
“ geance on them with furious rebukes ; and
“ they shall know that I am the Lord, when I
“ shall lay my vengeance upon them.”

A similar account is given by Zephaniah, chap. ii. 4.—8. “ Gaza shall be forsaken, and
“ Ashkelon a desolation ; they shall drive out
“ Ashdod at the noon-day, and Ekron shall be
“ rooted up. Wo unto the inhabitants of the
“ sea-coasts, the nation of the Cherethites, the
“ word of the Lord is against you : O Canaan,
“ the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy
“ thee, that there shall be no inhabitant. And
“ the sea-coasts shall be dwellings and cottages
“ for shepherds, and folds for flocks. And the
“ coasts shall be for the remnant of the house of
“ Judah ; they shall feed thereupon, in the
“ houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the
“ evening : for the Lord their God shall visit
“ them, and turn away their captivity.”

These last words shew, that the conquest in view, is coeval with the return of the Jews from their captivity ; but no such event took place upon their return from Babylon ; therefore it shall take place upon their return from the present dispersion, consequently after the battle of Armageddon.

The conquest of Moab is largely described in the xvth and xviith chapters of Isaiah¹, and in the xlviith chapter of Jeremiah².

The conquest of the country of the Ammonites is laid before us, Jer. xlix. 1, 2. “Concerning the Ammonites, thus saith the Lord, ‘Hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir? Why then doth their king inherit Gad, and his people dwell in his cities? Therefore behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will cause an alarm of war to be heard in Rabbah of the Ammonites, and it shall be a desolate heap, and her daughters shall be burnt with fire; then shall Israel be heir to them that were his heirs, saith the Lord.’” Israel did not hitherto possess the country of the Ammonites; but when settled in his own land after the

(1) That the time of this conquest is after the battle of Armageddon, (see p. 363. *et seq.*) The period of three years, mentioned chap. xvi. 14. does not refer to the preceding prophecy, but points to a different and near event. When the prophets mention a very remote event, they sometimes introduce a nearer event, relating to the same people or country, that when accomplished it may afford a proof of the completion of the more remote event in its own time. Several instances might be adduced of this, if it were necessary.

(2) The prophecy of Jeremiah is so similar to that of Isaiah, that they must both refer to the same time.

the battle of Armageddon, his boundary shall extend, as we have seen, from the coasts of the Mediterranean to the banks of the Euphrates. Then shall he be heir to the Ammonites. To that period therefore the prophecy points.

The conquest of the countries of Moab and Ammon is foretold by Zephaniah, chap. ii. 8.—11. “I have heard the reproach of Moab and the revilings of the children of Ammon, whereby they have reproached my people, and magnified themselves against their border. Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles and salt-pits, and a perpetual desolation, the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them. This shall they have for their pride, because they have reproached and magnified themselves against the people of the Lord of hosts. The Lord will be terrible unto them: for he will famish all the gods of the earth, and men shall worship him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen.” Here it is asserted, that the people of God, or the children of Israel, shall conquer these two countries, and then possess them, ver. 9.; at that time, when “all the gods of the earth shall be famished,” that is,

is, when every false religion shall be destroyed, and men shall every where worship the true God, ver. 11. These circumstances can only apply to the period after the battle of Armageddon, and immediately before the Millennium.

The conquest of the country of Edom by the people of Israel, and consequently at the same time, is predicted by Ezekiel, chap. xxv. 12. to 14. “ Thus saith the Lord God, Because that “ Edom hath dealt against the house of Judah, “ by taking vengeance, and hath greatly offend- “ ed and revenged himself upon them ; There- “ fore, thus saith the Lord God, I will also “ stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and will “ cut off man and beast from it, and I will “ make it desolate from Teman, and they of “ Dedan shall fall by the sword. And I will “ lay my vengeance upon Edom *by the hand of* “ *my people Israel*, and they shall do in Edom “ according to mine anger, and according to my “ fury ; and they shall know my vengeance, “ saith the Lord God.” They shall not only conquer the country of Edom, but they shall likewise possess it ; “ and they of the south shall “ possess the mount of Esau ; ” Obad. ver. 19.

The conquest of Syria at the same period, seems to be the event foretold by Jeremiah, chap. xlix. 23.—28. The punishment of Syria and Palestine, mentioned Zech. ix. 1.—8. cer-
tainly

tainly takes place after the battle of Armageddon, about the beginning of the Millennium; for it is then, “when the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, shall be towards the Lord,” ver. 1. that is, “when all nations shall serve him,”—“he that remaineth shall be for our God,” ver. 7. All that escape destruction shall submit to the true religion, when God “will encamp about his house, and no oppressor shall pass through them any more,” ver. 8. All these circumstances can apply only to the Millennium.

The punishment of the Cushites (Ethiopians, or rather Arabians) and Affyrians, mentioned Zeph. ii. 12, 13. seems to take place at the same time, because it is mentioned together with the conquest of Palestine, Moab and Ammon.

The punishment of Affyria, coeval with this period, is clearly asserted, Micah v. 6. “They shall waste the land of Affyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof.” This wasting of Affyria takes place when the Ruler of Israel “shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord his God, and they (the children of Israel) shall return,” ver. 4.; that is, about the time the Jews are converted and submit to the Mesiah, when “he (the Ruler) shall be great to the ends of the earth,” ver. 4. when he shall deliver his people from the

the Assyrian¹, then in their land, that is, from the blasphemous king then dwelling in Judea, ver. 6. when the Jews shall propagate the truth among the nations, ver. 7. and effectually subdue the enemies of religion, ver. 8. ; consequently this wasting of Assyria takes place after the battle of Armageddon.

Perhaps too the punishment of Elam, (or Persia), recorded Jer. xlix. 34.—38. shall be executed at the same time. There are indeed no circumstances in the narration to fix the time of its completion, unless we consider that expression, “I will set my throne in Elam,” ver. 38. to imply the establishment of the true religion in Persia; in which case, the destruction accompanying or preceding the establishment of the true religion must be after the battle of Armageddon, and immediately before the Millennium.

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(1) The mixture of the figurative and literal meaning occasions the greatest difficulty of all others in the interpretation of prophecy. The Assyrian here signifies the blasphemous king, then resident in Judea. But the land of Assyria is to be taken literally ; for the design of the prophecy is to intimate, that in regard forces are sent from Assyria to support the blasphemous king, they, as well as the other allies, shall be punished by the sword of God in return.

The conquest of Egypt at the same time is largely described, with the steps that lead to it, in chapters xviii. and xix. of Isaiah.

The three last verses of the nineteenth chapter are evidently descriptive of the Millennium, and can apply to no other period. The whole of the preceding prophecy is connected with that period by the expressions, “in that day,” frequently repeated; so that the application of this prophecy to the conquest of Senacherib, or to any period already past, must be erroneous, while the application of it I now offer must be just.

The eighteenth chapter shews the cause of the punishment inflicted on the Egyptians, which is recorded in the nineteenth chapter. Egypt is the land of “the winged cymbal,” (as Lowth properly explains it), if by Cush we understand Ethiopia or Arabia; the word translated *beyond* signifies either on this side or the other, and so is applicable to Egypt, as bordering on both these countries.

The crime laid to the charge of the Egyptians is, that they “send ambassadors by the sea, and “in vessels of bulrushes (papyrus) on the wa-“ters, saying, Go ye swift messengers, to a na-“tion scattered and peeled, to a people terrible “from their beginning hitherto; a nation
“meted

“ meted out and trodden down, whose land the
“ rivers have spoiled ¹.”

The messengers are sent to collect troops, in order to assist the beast at Armageddon.

The people against whom these troops are sent, are the Jews. The description given of the Jews by the Egyptians, (for the address to the messengers is put in their mouth), seems intended, to excite the hatred, and animate the courage of their troops, against the Jews. They are represented as a people “ scattered” or dispersed throughout the world, “ peeled,” or oppressed by all nations, “ terrible from their beginning hitherto ;” either that they are to be dreaded by other nations, on account of their enmity to them, or that they are objects of terror and astonishment, on account of the judgments inflicted on them : “ a nation meted out”

(of

(1) Bishop Lowth translates the passage thus: “ Go ye swift messengers to a nation stretched out in length, and smoothed ; a nation meted out by line, and trodden down, whose land the rivers have nourished.” But with all deference to the learned prelate, I think the common translation preferable. He supposes the messengers sent to the land, and described by its appearance ; no doubt considering the land as a metaphor, signifying the people : but then I find the words *nation* and *people* three several times inserted in the address, in all which, the term *land* should have been expressed or understood, in order to make the metaphor tolerable.

(of line)', on whom God himself has extended the line of destruction ; " trodden down," despised, and treated like the mire of the streets ; " whose land the rivers have spoiled," has been successively over-run by every conquering army². The design of this description is, to represent them as a people hated of God, and therefore worthy of being extirpated by men. The result of this expedition is given us, verses 3.—6. and it corresponds exactly with the description of the battle of Armageddon.—After a solemn invitation to all the inhabitants of the world to give ear, as to a matter of importance, in which all are interested ; God intimates, that he will at first give success to the expedition, so far as to collect a formidable army ; but that he will afterwards blast the expedition, by utterly destroying the forces so collected. All this is represented, by a fit and elegant metaphor. The conduct of Providence, in the first stage of the expedition, is compared to a " clear heat after rain, or a " dewy cloud in a day of harvest," which rapidly

(1) 2 Kings xxi. 13. Isa. xxxiv. 11.

(2) A conquering army is frequently compared to an overflowing river ; as Isa. viii. 8. and Dan. xi. The description is most applicable to the land of Judea, for it has been successively over-run, by the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Grecians, Romans, Saracens, and Turks.

pidly advances vegetation, perfects the bud and forms the blossom of the vine into a swelling grape. But when the hope of the husbandman is thus raised to a plentiful vintage, it is suddenly blasted, before the grapes are fully ripe ; the shoots of the vine cut off with pruning hooks ; the branches hewed down and scattered on the ground, become a prey to the rapacious birds of the mountains, and to the wild beasts of the earth¹. The last verse is a chronological note added to the prophecy, to shew the time of its completion. It shall “ be fulfilled in that time,” when the people described, ver. 2. against whom the expedition was contrived, “ shall be brought as a present unto “ the Lord of hosts—to the place of the name “ of the Lord of hosts, the mount Zion ;” that is, when the Jews shall be restored to their own land, for so the phrase is used, Isa. lxvi. 20. Now, we have seen that the battle of Armageddon and the restoration of the Jews exactly coincide. The spirit of prophecy having unfolded the crime of Egypt proceeds to shew the punishment of it. It is therefore entitled the Burden of Egypt. In order to illustrate it, he gives

(1) You will find this circumstance of making the forces collected at Armageddon a prey to rapacious birds, clearly asserted, Rev. xix. 17, 18.

gives a history of Egypt for some time before, probably from the fall of the Turkish empire ; as, that there shall be great divisions among the Egyptians, Isa. xix. 2.—That they shall be much under the influence of superstition, ver. 3.—That God will deliver them over to the dominion of “a cruel lord ;” meaning Antichrist, or the blasphemous king, then resident in Judea, ver. 4.—That he shall seize on all the sources of their wealth, as the produce of their soil, of their manufactories, of their river and fish ponds, ver. 5.—10. ; which corresponds exactly with the representation of Daniel xi. 43. “He shall have power over the treasures of “gold and of silver, and over all the precious “things of Egypt.” God charges the counsellors of Egypt with folly, and the people of it with cowardice, in submitting tamely to such delusion and oppression ; Isa. xix. 11.—16. Then follows an account of the punishment he had in view, and the consequences of it.

He represents it in general, as a divine interposition, ver. 16. then adds the manner of it. “And the land of Judah shall be a terror unto “Egypt, every one that maketh mention there- “of, shall be afraid in himself ; because of the “counsel of the Lord of hosts, which he hath “determined against it ;” ver. 17. Tidings of the fall of the beast and his adherents in Judea, fill

fill his party in Egypt with terror ; nor is that terror groundless, for the victorious Jewish army enters Egypt, to execute the counsel of God concerning that kingdom. “ In that “ day, shall five cities in the land of Egypt, “ speak the language of Canaan, and swear to “ the Lord of hosts ; one shall be called the city “ of destruction,” ver. 18. At that time, five parts out of six¹ of the land of Egypt, shall embrace the true religion, carried there by the Jews, and shall devote themselves to the service of JEHOVAH. The remaining sixth part, adhering to the Antichristian tyranny, and superstition of their late “ cruel lord,” shall be utterly

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(1) The interpretation given above is suggested by Calvin, on Isaiah. I adopt it as being most consistent with the rest of the passage : when it is said that “ there shall be an altar to the Lord in the midst of Egypt, “ and a pillar at the border thereof : ” That “ the Lord shall be known to the Egyptians, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord : ” That “ the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians,” and “ be a third with Israel and Affyria.” These expressions imply, that the great body of the nation embraces the true religion : Now, five parts out of six constitute the bulk of the nation ; but five cities of all Egypt, make a very small part of the nation ; which by no means agrees with the rest of the representation.

ly destroyed. To the close of the chapter, there is an account of Egypt as making a part of the Millennial church. The countries of Edom, Moab and Ammon, are not only conquered but possessed by the Jews, as we have seen ; which representation agrees with the extent of their border from the coasts of the Mediterranean to the banks of the Euphrates. But the countries of Assyria and Egypt, though conquered, are not possessed by them, as appears from ver. 20. 24, 25. which represent them as two distinct nations, holding church-communion with each other, and with the people of Israel.

When peace is established, the Jewish church shall sing that hymn, Isa. xiv. 3.—27. and chap. xxv. ver. 1.—5.

In the progress of events, we have seen the nations over which the blasphemous king has a spiritual jurisdiction ; the nations who support him,

(1) Some read, “the city of the sun,” by changing *he* into *heth*, and suppose that Heliopolis is intended. But Lowth, who adopts that reading, seems to suspect, that the text might have met with unfair management from Omar or his party, in order to accommodate it to his views, and procure respect to his schismatist temple. But on the supposition that the reading contended for were more clearly established than it can be, it would only involve the passage in obscurity ; whereas, the interpretation given above is clear, and consistent with the scope of the whole passage.

him in his last extremity ; the nations involved in his fall at Armageddon ; the nations conquered by the Jews, after Armageddon ; and these are nearly the same. The concurrence of these four several representations serve to prove, that the progress marked is not the contrivance of fancy, but the investigation of the truth.

SECTION IV.

Restoration of the dispersed Jews.

A fourth event foretold, which shall probably be accomplished at this period, is the restoration of those Jews, who had not an opportunity to join their brethren, in the wilderness of Assyria. The Christian powers in the several countries where they reside, shall give their aid cheerfully and liberally, to convey them to the land of promise, then possessed by their brethren, in consequence of the victory at Armageddon. This is repeatedly asserted in the prophecy of Isaiah. “ Thus saith the Lord “ God, Behold, I will lift up my hand to the “ Gentiles, and set up my standard to the peo-“ ple : and they shall bring thy sons in their “ arms, and thy daughters shall be carried up-“ on their shoulders ; ” chap. xlix. 22. “ Who “ are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves

3 D — “ to

“ to their windows? Surely the isles shall wait
“ for me, and the ships of Tarshish¹ first, to
“ bring thy sons from far, their silver and their
“ gold with them, unto the name of the Lord
“ thy God; and to the holy One of Israel, be-
“ cause he hath glorified thee;” chap. ix. 8, 9.
“ And they (the Gentiles) shall bring all your
“ brethren for an offering unto the Lord, out of
“ all nations, upon horses, and in chariots, and
“ in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift
“ beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, faith
“ the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an of-
“ fering in a clean vessel, into the house of the
“ Lord,” chap. lxvi. 20.

S E C.

(1) Bochart supposes Tarshish to be a part of Spain, afterwards called Tartessus. But it appears by comparing 1 Kings xxii. 48. with 2 Chron. xx. 36. that there was a place of the same name near Ophir, supposed by some to lie in the East Indies, by others, on the east coast of Africa. Mr. Bruce, in his “ Travels to discover the Source of Nile,” has discussed this subject with much information and ability; and with great appearance of truth, places Tarshish and Ophir, on the eastern coast of Africa. It is certain that the expression likewise is proverbial, signifying any ships famous for trade: and what ships so famous in these latter days, as those of Britain; perhaps they shall shew the first example of carrying God’s exiled people to their own land.

SECTION V.

Missionaries are sent from Judea, to propagate the Gospel among the Nations.

ANOTHER event which shall begin to be accomplished at this period is, the propagation of the gospel by the Jews, among the benighted nations. While they carry in the one hand the temporal sword for the destruction of spiritual Babylon, they hold in the other the spiritual sword, for the deliverance of ignorant nations, from the tyranny of sin and Satan.

A commission given to the Jews for this purpose, together with the execution and success of it, is recorded Isa. xlv. 20.—25. “ Assemble yourselves and come: draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save.” Here God addresses the Jews immediately upon their restoration; and represents the deplorable condition of those nations, that were still involved in ignorance and idolatry. “ Tell ye, and bring them near, yea, let them take counsel together: Who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? Have not I the Lord? And there is no god else beside me, a just God, and

“ and a Saviour, there is none beside me.” He expressly commands the Jews to bring these nations near to him, who were hitherto alienated from him. He directs as to the manner, they must be brought near, by persuasion, “ let them take counsel together;” they are to be persuaded, by urging on their consciences, the completion of the prophecy concerning the conversion and restoration of the Jews, predicted so long before; affording sufficient evidence to the rational mind, that JEHOVAH is the only true God, and the only Saviour of those who trust in him. “ Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.” He issues a proclamation in his own name by way of direction to them to make a free offer of the Saviour, to all people without exception; and a promise of eternal salvation to those who look to him with the eye of faith; to remind them at the same time that “ there is no salvation in any other.” By way of encouragement to the Jews, to execute this commission faithfully and zealously, he intimates the success of it: “ I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength;

“ strength : even to him shall men come, and
“ all that are incensed against him shall be
“ ashamed.” He declares by a solemn oath, that
every knee shall bow to his sovereignty, and
every tongue confess the justice of his claim.

That multitudes shall lay hold of the mercy offered, and cheerfully adore him as their Saviour ; while those who obstinately reject him, shall reluctantly bow the knee, to offer unavailing supplications, and proclaim his justice, by their shrieks of woe, when he sitteth on the throne of his glory, and shall call all nations before him¹.

This is asserted in plain terms, Isa. ii. 2, 3,
“ And it shall come to pass in the last days,
“ that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall
“ be established in the top of the mountains,—
“ and all nations shall flow unto it ;—for *out of*
“ Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of
“ the Lord from Jerusalem.” It is implied in the figurative description of the progress of the gospel in the latter days, which frequently occurs in the prophets. The gospel, carrying divine grace to all nations, is represented by a river entering into the sea ; but this river issues from the sanctuary at Jerusalem ; that is, the gospel proceeds from, and is propagated by the Jewish

(1) Compare Phil. ii. 20. with Rom. xiv. 11.

Jewish church. “ And the waters came down “ from under the right side of the house ;—then “ said he unto me, These waters issue out toward “ the east country, and go down into the desert, “ and go into the sea ;” Ezek. xlvi. 1.—8, “ And a fountain shall come forth of the house “ of the Lord, and shall water the valley of “ Shittim,” Joel iii. 18. “ And it shall be in “ that day, that living waters shall go out from “ Jerusalem : half of them toward the former “ sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea : “ in summer and in winter shall it be,” Zech. xiv. 8.

A narration of the same event, is laid before us, Isa. lxvi, 19. “ And I will set a sign among “ them (the Gentiles), and I will send those that “ escape of them (the Jews) unto the nations, “ to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the “ bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar “ off, that have not heard my fame, neither “ have seen my glory ; and they shall declare “ my glory among the Gentiles.” These places to which the Jewish missionaries are sent, lie in all directions, east, west, south, and north from Judea. Tarshish, as the name of a place on the eastern ocean, is most probably here a general term for the eastern nations ; Pul and Lud represent the inhabitants of the continent of Africa,

frica, for Lud is commonly translated Lybians ; Tubal and Javan lie to the north, the former being commonly reckoned the Scythians or Tatars, the latter the Grecians ; the Isles afar off, usually denote the western regions of the world'. The excellent spirit and great success of the Jewish missionaries, in propagating the gospel, is represented by a significant metaphor, Micah v. 7. " And the remnant of Jacob shall be in " the midst of many people, as a dew from the " Lord, as the showers upon the grafs, that tar- " rieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of " men." As the dew descends in abundance— without noise—in its season, not regarding the desires or averstions of men—to make the earth fruitful in those productions that are necessary for

(1) When we compare this verse, with that immediately following, " And they (the Gentiles) shall bring " your brethren for an offering unto the Lord ;" &c. we see that the two events last mentioned, are accomplishing at the same time. The Jews send missionaries to all the nations from Judea, and the nations send back to Judea such of the Jews as are dispersed among them, and have not yet joined their brethren : The providence of God seems to have appointed this twofold communication, betwixt the Jews and Gentiles, in the latter days, that the great arguments for revealed religion arising from the completion of prophecy, may be more extensively known, and more deeply impressed on the hearts of mankind, for their eternal salvation.

for the life and happiness of man ; so the Jews directed by the Spirit of God, shall liberally and extensively diffuse a knowledge of the truth ; in all humility, without pride or babbling ; independent of the approbation or disapprobation of man ; to make those whom they instruct, fruitful in holiness, in order to their eternal happiness'.

CHAP.

(1) By comparing this verse with that immediately following, "and the remnant of Jacob shall be as a lion," &c. we learn the concurrence of this event, with the third mentioned, as a consequent of the battle of Armageddon.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the Millennium.

THE united influence of these several events produces a great revolution, a universal change in the religion and morals of mankind. Any revolution is in prophetic phrase an earthquake; for as an earthquake alters the appearance of the natural world, a revolution changes the face of the political or moral world. But this is called “a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great,” Rev. xvi. 18. The strongest bulwarks of the kingdom of Satan are overturned by it. “Every island fled away, and the mountains were not found,” ver. 20. The renovation of mankind is so great and extensive that it is called “new heavens and a new earth,” Isa. lxv. 17.; chap. lxvi. 22.; 2 Peter iii. 13.; Rev. xxi. 1.

This revolution, on account of its continuing a thousand years, is commonly termed by the writers on the Apocalypse, The Millennium.

SECTION I.

The Confinement of Satan.

AN uncontroverted character of this period is, the confinement of Satan. “ And I saw an “ angel come down from heaven, having the “ key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain “ in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, “ that old serpent, which is the Devil and Sa-“ tan, and bound him a thousand years; and “ cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him “ up, and set a seal upon him, that he should “ deceive the nations no more, till the thousand “ years should be fulfilled; and after that he “ must be loosed a little season;” Rev. xx. 1, 2, 3.

It is customary among men to confine great offenders, particularly such as contrive plots against the state, to the strongest prisons, to load them with irons, and, among the ancients, the door, when locked, was sealed for further security. So, when Daniel was put into the lions den, the stone that covered it was sealed “ with “ the king’s signet, and those of his lords;” Dan. vi. 17. In allusion to these customs, Satan is represented as seized, bound and imprisoned,

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the door as locked and sealed, to intimate, that an effectual restraint shall be laid on him during this period. Perhaps this restraint may be an actual confinement in the abyss which the Devil and his angels dread, as appears from their beseeching our Lord that he would not command them to go to the deep, Luke viii. 31. But whatever restraint is laid on in the invisible world, it can only appear to the eye of sense in the effects resulting from it.

The great advantage arising from the restraint laid on Satan is, that he cannot deceive the nations during the Millennium. This implies the removal of those obstacles which lie in the way of propagating the gospel. At present, the difficulties are insurmountable. In Popish countries, the Scriptures are carefully taken out of the hands of the people, lest they should judge for themselves; and others are prevented from giving them instruction, by the terrors of fire and faggot. In most Mahometan, and in some Pagan nations, an attempt to convert the subjects to the Christian faith, is punishable with death. Now, so much violence, in opposition to a religion which breathes nothing but peace and love, can only proceed from the delusions of Satan. When he is restrained, these are removed, and the gospel shall have free course and be glorified.

Again, this confinement implies the removal of the numberless secret objections that arise in the human heart against the truth. “ If our “ gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; “ in whom the god of this world hath blinded “ the minds of them who believe not, lest the “ light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is “ the image of God, should shine unto them.” Farther, this restraint implies, that the church shall be free from those persecutions she experienced more or less in every former period. The Devil “ was a murderer from the beginning,” and in all the persecutions of the church, had the chief, though invisible hand; his confinement therefore secures her peace.

SECTION II.

The Resurrection and Reign of the Martyrs.

ANOTHER character of the Millennium is, the resurrection and reign of the Martyrs. “ And “ I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judg- “ ment was given unto them; and I saw the “ souls of them that were beheaded for the “ witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, “ and which had not worshipped the beast, nei- “ ther his image, neither had received his mark “ upon

“ upon their foreheads, or in their hands ; and
“ they lived and reigned with Christ a thou-
“ sand years. But the rest of the dead lived
“ not again, until the thousand years were fi-
“ nished. This is the first resurrection. Ble-
“ sed and holy is he that hath part in the first
“ resurrection ; on such the second death hath
“ no power, but they shall be priests of God
“ and of Christ, and shall reign with him a
“ thousand years ;” Rev. xx. 4, 5, 6.

Few passages of sacred writ have occasioned such various opinions and warm contests as this. However, the controversy may be reduced to this question, Is the first resurrection to be taken in a literal or figurative sense ?

Among those who contend for a literal resurrection, different opinions have obtained respecting the manner of it. It were uncandid to confound them in the mass together, and charge some with the absurdities maintained by others. Cerinthus, who was contemporary with the Apostle John, maintained that the Millennium would be employed in nuptial entertainments and carnal delights.

His opinions were revived in the beginning of the third century, and propagated at Rome by one Poculus, a Montanist. The same sentiments were propagated, about the middle of the third century, by Nepos, an Egyptian Bishop,

shop, who published a treatise, entitled, *A Confutation of the Allegorists*; in which he ridicules the opinion of those who were for explaining the Millennium in a figurative sense. Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, undertook to give a formal answer to his treatise, in two books concerning the promises¹.

Many of the fathers, who deemed Cerinthus a heretic, explained the first resurrection in a literal sense. They were of opinion, “That all the saints shall arise from the dead a thousand years before the general resurrection, and live in Jerusalem, new-built and adorned, together with Christ, who shall personally reside there; and that they shall enjoy all the lawful pleasures of this earth, where plenty shall then abound.” This was the opinion of Ireneus, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Lactantius, and others. It would appear this opinion originated from Papias, who pretended, that it was received by tradition from the Apostle John. But Eusebius says of this Papius, that “he was a man of slender judgment;” and if the tradition preserved by Ireneus be inspected, it will sufficiently justify that charge.

Part of the tradition is as follows: “The days shall come in which there shall be vines, which shall severally have ten thousand branches: and

(1) Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. vii. c. 1. 24, 25.

and each of these branches shall have ten thousand lesser branches ; and each of these lesser branches shall have ten thousand twigs ; and each of these twigs shall have ten thousand clusters of grapes ; and in every one of these clusters shall be ten thousand grapes ; and every one of these grapes being pressed, shall give twenty-five metretas (that is, according to the mildest computation, 275 gallons) of wine ; and when one shall take hold of one of these sacred bunches, another shall cry out, I am a better bunch, take me, and by me bless the Lord." Can any man be so bereft of sense, as to imagine this stuff could ever come out of the mouth of an Apostle¹ ?

A third opinion on this subject is that of Mede, in which he is followed by Daubuze, Bishop Newton, and the most sensible part of the modern Millenniarians. He supposes the great day of judgment to continue a thousand years ; that in the morning of that day, or at the beginning of the thousand years, the martyrs shall arise from the dead, and, continue on earth, till the evening of the great day, which concludes with the general resurrection of all the dead. This opinion differs in several respects from that of the Fathers. It supposes, that martyrs only rise from the dead in the first resurrection,

(1) Whitby in his *Treatise on the True Millennium.*

surrection, not all saints: That the whole earth shall be possessed by them; not Jerusalem and the land of Judea only: That Christ shall not personally dwell on earth: That the saints shall be occupied in spiritual, not sensual delights¹¹. Bishop Burnet held an opinion different from all these, in which I presume he has had few followers. He supposes that the Millennium follows the general judgment, when this earth, new modelled by the conflagration, accompanying that awful event, shall be the habitation of the saints for a thousand years. But as the Scriptures represent Gog and Magog compassing the camp of the saints and the beloved city, at the end of these thousand years, he is much at a loss to account for the introduction of those inhabitants into his new earth. As all the wicked were destroyed by the general judgment, he supposes them to be generated from the mud or slime of the earth, as brute creatures were originally. But this supposition, with every intelligent reader, must sink his opinion in the mud.

Another opinion on this subject, is that of Piscator, who allows a literal resurrection of the martyrs a thousand years before the general judgment,

(11) See Mede's Apocalyptic Key, Daubuzé on the Apocalypse, Newton's Dissertations on Prophecies. It would appear Augustine held an opinion similar to this, but he afterwards renounced it as a heresy.

judgment, but supposes they shall reign with Christ in heaven, not on the earth: But to account in that case for their being compassed about by Gog and his forces in their place of residence, requires an effort of genius beyond that of Dr. Burnet.

But the great majority of Christians in all ages have maintained, and I think with reason, that the first resurrection is a figurative expression, intimating, that the saints of the Millennium shall have the spirit of the martyrs, the same temper and disposition with the most approved followers of Christ in former ages.

To establish the truth of this opinion, I offer the following arguments¹; and I persuade myself, that whoever will weigh them without prejudice or partiality, must be satisfied that the idea of a literal resurrection, however qualified, is erroneous.

1. The language of the *Apocalypse* is highly figurative. The resurrection of the witnesses, chap. xi. 11. is figurative, by consent of all sound interpreters, which affords a presumption that the resurrection of the martyrs may be so too.

2. The figure is not peculiar to the *Apocalypse*. It is used repeatedly throughout the di-

(1) The arguments are taken chiefly from Whitby's *Treatise of the True Millennium*.

vine word, to denote either a deliverance from outward calamities, as Psal. cxxxviii. 7. or a renovation of nature, which is a deliverance from the bondage of sin, Eph. ii. 1. Now during the Millennium (as we shall presently see) prosperity abounds after tedious calamities, righteousness prevails after wickedness is suppressed. It is therefore, according to scripture phraseology, fitly represented by a resurrection.

3. They who contend for a literal resurrection, as Mede, Daubuze, and Newton, acknowledge, that the conversion of the Jews will immediately precede that event; and the Apostle Paul intimates, that the conversion of the Jews shall be accompanied by an extensive propagation of the gospel among the Gentiles, Rom. xi. 12. But the events are represented both in the Old and New Testament by a resurrection; while the phrase is so qualified that you must understand it in a figurative sense. Now, when the Apostle John uses the same expressions to denote the same times and events, I think it not only reasonable but necessary on the principles of sound criticism, to take them in the same sense, consequently not in a literal, but a figurative sense.

4. The expressions in this passage are so qualified, that they militate powerfully against a literal

literal resurrection. “ I saw the *souls* of them “ that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, “ —and they lived.” The scriptures always describe a literal resurrection by the reviviscency of the body, but never of the soul; because on the principles of our religion, the soul dies not, the body only requires to be raised and revived. Again, this expression readily suggests to us, persons of a similar temper and disposition with the martyrs. John the Baptist is called Elias by the Old Testament prophets, because he would appear in the spirit of Elias. The heretics in the days of the Apostles are termed Antichrists, because they had the spirit of the great Antichrist foretold; so the saints, particularly the rulers, during the Millennium, are called the raised martyrs, because they shall be eminently possessed of the spirit of the martyrs.

5. The opinion of a literal resurrection, involves in it many tenets inconsistent with the testimonies of scripture, and the genius of the Christian religion.

It is inconsistent with the happiness of departed saints, who enjoy the beatific vision of God in heaven; who “ are absent from the body and present with the Lord;”—“ who are through faith and patience, now inheriting the promises.” Shall we esteem it an additional happiness, to quit the presence of the Lord,

Lord, for the society of men? Is it desirable for those who have arrived at their heavenly Father's house to return again to the land of their sojourning? Or shall we say, that God constrains them to return; then is it thus he rewards the integrity of his most faithful servants, to subject them to a second period of difficulty and trial, while ordinary saints are admitted to uninterrupted happiness at the consummation of the first period: That difficulties occur after the Millennium, is evident from this, That Gog and Magog "compass the camp of the saints, " and the beloved city," Rev. xx.

It is inconsistent with the plain directions of our Lord and his Apostles. He commands us, "not to lay up treasures for ourselves on earth, " but to lay up our treasures in heaven," Matth. vi. 19. The Apostle enjoins, "to set our affections on things above, not on things on the earth," Col. iii. 2. But, if the rewards of Christ's followers, in whole or in part, were bestowed on this earth, it would be lawful to lay up treasures, and set our affections on things on this earth.

It is inconsistent with the accounts given us of the resurrection, and the circumstances that accompany it. The efficient cause of the resurrection is Jesus Christ, who shall then personally descend to the earth. "The Lord himself

" shall

“ shall descend from heaven with a shout, with
“ the voice of the archangel, and with the
“ trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall
“ rise first,” 1 Thes. iv. 16. “ The Lord Jesus
“ shall be revealed from heaven in flaming
“ fire,” 2 Thes. i. 7. If Christ descends not,
there will be no resurrection; besides, the Mil-
lenarians apply the passages just quoted to the
first resurrection, and therefore acknowledge his
descent. Now I ask, whether he remains on
earth from that period till the general resurrec-
tion, or returns to heaven? If he remains on
earth, he too must be compassed about by Gog
and Magog, in the beloved city, which appears
to me utterly inconsistent with his state of ex-
altation, and the glory in which he would ap-
pear. The most sensible part of the modern
Millenarians, have therefore renounced the idea
of his personal presence on earth. If he returns
to heaven, he must descend again at the general
resurrection, which would make three several
appearances of Christ on earth, in express con-
tradiction to what the Apostle has delivered:
“ Once hath he appeared to put away sin by the
“ sacrifice of himself,—and unto them that look
“ for him shall he appear the *second* time, without
“ sin unto salvation;” Heb. ix. 27, 28. Again,
by the resurrection the body is materially chan-
ged. “ That which was sown in weakness, dis-
“ honour,

“ honour, and corruption, shall be raised in power and glory, in incorruption: that which was formerly a natural body, shall then be a spiritual body,” 1 Cor. xv. 42, 43, 44. Now, if the bodies of the Martyrs are not raised with these qualifications, the scripture doctrine of the resurrection is contradicted. But if they are raised with these qualifications, the martyrs will have no occasion for, nor find a relish in those earthly blessings which the Millenarians have treasured up for them.—If it be said, that they are changed only in part by the first resurrection, and shall undergo a second change at the general resurrection, that opinion likewise contradicts the scripture; for, “It is appointed unto all men *once* to die,” Heb. ix. 27. but the martyrs would undergo a change similar to death *twice*. Further the Apostle comprehends all that undergo any change by the general resurrection in two classes; first, such as are raised from their graves; and secondly, such as are then living on earth, who shall undergo a change similar to death. Now, if the martyrs are not included in the first class, they certainly are not in the second; for the Apostle expressly declares, that they who should be changed are such as had not slept, 1 Cor. xv. 51. which cannot apply to the raised martyrs.

In a word, the scriptures represent the resurrection of the just, as performed suddenly. “In
“ a

“a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, (for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed);” 1 Cor. xv. 52. But this representation can by no means accord with the doctrine which makes the day of judgment to continue a thousand years, and part of the just to be raised at the beginning, the rest at the end of that period.

There are only two objections that deserve to be examined, against a figurative explication of the first resurrection. One is taken from these words: “But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished,” Rev. xx. 5. on which Daubuze observes, “The words here, *the rest of the dead*, shew that the persons before mentioned, as dead and living again, were really dead.” For if they were not, what occasion was there to say, the rest of the dead? “Here is plainly an opposition, or rather exception, which admits of no equivocation, out of a rule or assertion which must be of the same kind; or else what need is there of such exception?” The force of this objection is clearly and candidly stated by Newton. “If the martyrs rise only in a spiritual sense; then the rest of the dead rise only in a spiritual sense; but if the rest of the dead really rise, the martyrs rise in the same manner.”

(1) Daubuze on the Rev. p. 568.

“manner’.” I allow the ground of this argument to be perfectly just, that the living martyrs are opposed to the “rest of the dead,” and must be taken in the same sense, whether literal or figurative. But whereas Daubuze, Newton and others, take the phrase, “rest of the dead” in a literal sense, I think these are forcible reasons for taking it in a figurative sense.

First, The rest ($\delta\lambda\omega\pi\sigma\sigma$) of the dead, refer to chap. xix 21. “the remnant ($\alpha\iota\lambda\omega\pi\sigma\sigma$) who were “slain with the sword of him who sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth.” The remnant there can be no other than persons having the spirit of Antichrist, who were not destroyed either by the battle of Armageddon, or the wars consequently upon it, but were worn out by the prevailing power of the gospel, and so remained during the thousand years dead; *i. e.* the spirit was extinct, and incapable of making any opposition to the truth; but at the end of the thousand years, as Satan was loosed, so the spirit of Antichrist formerly extinguished, then revived, stirring up new troubles in opposition to the truth.

Secondly, That “the rest of the dead,” cannot apply, as Newton and others contend, to all mankind, except the martyrs raised at the general resurrection, is evident from this, that the general

(1) *Dissert. on Prophecy*, p. 333.

general resurrection does not take place immediately after the thousand years are finished. “A ‘little season,’ ” intervenes, Rev. xx. 3. It may be called little, in comparison with the period immediately preceding, in which the martyrs reigned, and so may include some centuries: at any rate, the events which take place during that season, as the going forth of Satan to deceive the nations,—his gathering of them from the four corners of the earth,—the preparation for and invasion of the church by Gog and his followers, together with their destruction, necessarily require a considerable period of time for their accomplishment. If, therefore, you take “the rest of the dead” in a literal sense, it is not true, that they lived immediately after the thousand years were finished. But if you take the phrase in a figurative sense, it is strictly true, that those who were slain by the sword of him that sat on the horse, revived immediately after the thousand years were finished, in persons of a similar temper and disposition; such are Gog and his followers.

The second objection of the Millenarians, is taken from these words: “This is the first resurrection,” Rev. xx. 5. on which Daubuzé argues. “It is by all allowed, that the second resurrection is of bodies; and if so, why not also the first, since both are expressed in the

“like terms^{1.}.” “We should be cautious and tender (says Newton) of making the first resurrection an allegory, lest others should reduce the second into an allegory too^{2.}” “In answer I would observe, that the scriptures frequently mention the second or new birth. The first birth is of the body. Is it necessary that the second should be so too? Will any man acquainted with the scriptures, put the question now which Nicodemus formerly proposed to our Lord? “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born,” John iii. 4. The second birth is doubtless an allegory. But does it follow, that the first birth is an allegory too? The scriptures mention the second death: now the first death is that of the body. But is it necessary that we understand the second death of the body only? Does it affect the body in the same manner, by putting it in a state of insensibility and putrefaction?—The terms first and second, are used in scripture to distinguish subjects, which are in some respects similar, but in others are very different, lest we should mistake the one for the other; and so the term “first resurrection” is used here, to shew that this part of the prophecy does not describe such a change as

shall

(1) Daubuze on the Rev. p. 568.

(2) *Dissert. on Prophecy*, p. 333.

shall take place at the general resurrection. Again, it may signify, that as the first death is to wicked men an earnest of and a preparatory step to the second death ; so the first resurrection is to good men an earnest of and a preparatory step to the general resurrection. And from the whole tenor of sacred writ, it appears, that a figurative, not a literal resurrection, even a renovation of nature, qualifies men for happiness at the second resurrection : “ If Christ be in you, the spirit is life “ because of righteousness, (this is the first re-“ surrection); but if the Spirit of him that rai-“ sed up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, the “ Spirit shall also quicken your mortal bodies ; “ (this is the second resurrection,)” Rome. viii. 10, 11.

Now, what a renovation of nature is to every individual member of the church, the Millennial state is to the whole church, an earnest of and preparation for the glory of a future state, by a powerful, vital, universal influence, of the Spirit of God.

SECTION III.

Characters of the Millennial Church.

When the Millennium is viewed by the light of scripture, without the colouring of Jewish fables, the dreams of enthusiasts, or the suppositions

sitions of ingenious men, the happiness of that period appears to consist in the following particulars :

1. An extensive propagation of the gospel. So that Christianity shall be the established religion of all the world, or (making some allowance for the highly figurative language of the prophets) at least of the far greater part of it. The Jews shall be previously converted, as we have already seen : and as the rejection of them, was followed by an extensive propagation of the gospel among the Gentiles ; so the receiving them again to be members of the church, shall be accompanied with a much greater enlargement of the kingdom of Christ. “ If the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness ? If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead ? ” Rom. xi. 12. 15.

Many are the promises which intimate, that the Messiah’s kingdom shall extend over all the earth, and these promises point to this particular period. “ Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession,” Psal. ii. 8. “ All the ends of the world shall remember, and turn unto the Lord : and all the kindreds

“ kindreds of the nations shall worship before
“ thee,” Psal. xxii. 27. “ God be merciful unto
“ us,—that thy way may be known upon
“ earth, thy saving health among all nations.
“ God shall bless us: and all the ends of the
“ earth shall fear him,” Psal. lxvii. 1, 2. 7. “ He
“ shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and
“ from the river unto the ends of the earth.—
“ Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all
“ nations shall serve him.—Men shall be blessed
“ in him: all nations shall call him blessed,”
Psal. lxxii. 8. 11. 17. “ Thou shalt arise, and
“ have mercy upon Zion;—so the heathen shall
“ fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings
“ of the earth thy glory,” Psal. cii. 13. 15.
“ And it shall come to pass in the last days, that
“ the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be es-
“ tablished in the top of the mountains, and all na-
“ tions shall flow unto it¹, Isa. ii. 2. “ The Gen-
“ tiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the
“ brightness of thy rising.—The abundance of
“ the sea shall be converted unto thee, the for-
“ ces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee,” Isa.
lx. 3. 5. “ At that time they shall call Jerusa-
“ lem the throne of the Lord, and all the na-
“ tions shall be gathered unto it, to the name of
“ the Lord, to Jerusalem: neither shall they
“ walk

(1) Zech. ix. 10. Micah iv. 1, 2.

“ walk any more after the imagination of their
“ evil heart,” Jer. iii. 17. “ The Gentiles shall
“ come unto thee from the ends of the earth,
“ and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherit-
“ ed lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no
“ profit,” Jer. xvi. 19. “ The stone that smote
“ the image became a great mountain, and fill-
“ ed the whole earth,” Dan. ii. 35. “ I saw
“ in the night visions, and behold, one like the
“ Son of man;—and there was given him do-
“ minion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all
“ people, nations, and languages should serve
“ him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion,
“ which shall not pass away, and his kingdom
“ that which shall not be destroyed;—and the
“ kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of
“ the kingdom under the whole heaven shall
“ be given to the people of the saints of the
“ most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting
“ kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and o-
“ bey him,” Dan. vii. 13, 14. 27. “ The Lord—
“ will famish all the gods of the earth, and men
“ shall worship him, every one from his place,
“ even all the isles of the heathen,” Zeph. ii.
11. “ I will turn to the people a pure language,
“ that they may all call upon the name of the
“ Lord, to serve him with one consent,” Zeph.
iii. 9. “ Thus saith the Lord of hosts, It shall
“ yet come to pass, that there shall come people,
“ and

“ and the inhabitants of many cities: And the
“ inhabitants of one city shall go to another,
“ saying, Let us go speedily and pray before the
“ Lord, and to seek the Lord of Hosts: I will
“ go also. Yea, many people, and strong nations
“ shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jeru-
“ salem, and to pray before the Lord,” Zech.
viii. 20, 21, 22. “ And the Lord shall be king
“ over all the earth: in that day shall there be
“ one Lord, and his name one,” Zech. xiv. 9.
“ From the rising of the sun, even unto the go-
“ ing down of the same, my Name shall be great
“ among the Gentiles, and in every place in-
“ cense shall be offered unto my Name, and a
“ pure offering; for my Name shall be great
“ among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts,”
Mal. i. 11. “ And there were great voices in
“ heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world
“ are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of
“ his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and
“ ever,” Rev. xi. 15.

II. The church at this period shall be united in the use of the same government and ordinances, in doctrine and discipline, so as to constitute one body. In proof of this assertion, observe, such union actually subsisted betwixt the several parts of the primitive church, though extensively diffused over the earth. In consequence of

of this union, the church is represented by the metaphor of a woman, Rev. xii. 1. During the reign of Antichrist, this woman is “hid in the wilderness;” that is, the church as a community is invisible in the world. But the period of her state in the wilderness, being limited to 1260 years, this implies, that at the close of that period she shall again be visible as a community, consequently united in the use of the same government and ordinances.

Again, the Millennial church shall be formed chiefly by the ministry of the converted Jews; “for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and “the word of the Lord from Jerusalem,” Isa. ii. 3.; and they shall form the several churches converted by them, upon the plan of their own national church, being the model they received from God in the wilderness. This circumstance was one great cause of the union which prevailed in the primitive church. All the Gentiles were converted by Jews, and when it is repeated immediately before, and during the Millennium, it shall occasion a similar union at that period.

The several texts which intimate that the Gentiles shall flow into Jerusalem, Isa. ii. 2. and lx. 1.—7. imply, not only that they shall be admitted members of the church, but likewise that they shall consider the Jewish church

as a centre of union, to which all controversies shall be referred, and to whose decisions they shall submit. This was another circumstance which prevented division in the primitive church, as appears from the reference of the controversy respecting circumcision, *Acts xv. 22.—30.*

The reality and necessity of such an union among the members of the Millennial church, is asserted by Zechariah, chap. xiv. 16, 17. “ And “ it shall come to pass, that every one that is “ left of all the nations which came against Je-“ rusalem, shall even go up, from year to year, “ to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and “ to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall “ be, that who so will not come up of all the fa-“ milies of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship “ the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them “ shall be no rain.” To keep the feast of tabernacles at Jerusalem, according to the Mosaick institution, at that period in which the church extends over all the earth, is obviously impossible, because of the great distance of many places from Jerusalem. By the feast of tabernacles, we are to understand in general, the gospel-ordinances, so called, not only in allusion to the Mosaick institution, but in regard the Jews actually dwelt in tabernacles, in the wilderness of Affyria, when the knowledge of these ordinances is communicated to them, *Hosea*

xii. 9. That “all the families of the earth
“ shall come to Jerusalem to observe this feast.”
signifies, that the several nations of the world
shall observe these ordinances, according to the
plan delivered to the Jewish church; and the
threatening to withhold rain from those who do
not comply, intimates, that the influences of
the Spirit, (Psal. lxxii. 6.), by which alone these
ordinances are rendered profitable to the souls of
men, shall be withheld from any people or party,
who shall presume to dispense these ordinances
in any other manner. The friendly intercourse
and spiritual communion which actually subsist
betwixt the various members of the Millennial
church, in consequence of their union with each
other, and with the Jewish church as their centre,
is represented, Isa. xix. 23.—25. “In that
“ day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to
“ Affyria, and the Affyrian shall come into
“ Egypt, and the Egyptian into Affyria; and the
“ Egyptians shall serve with the Affyrians. In
“ that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt,
“ and with Affyria, even a blessing in the midst
“ of the land; whom the Lord of hosts shall
“ bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people,
“ and Affyria the work of my hands, and Israel
“ mine inheritance.”

III. The support of civil government is another ingredient in the happiness of the Millennial church. It is expressly promised, "Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers," Isa. xlix. 23. "Their kings shall minister unto thee," chap. lx. 10.

Civil government has in some measure supported the church, ever since Christianity became the established religion of the Roman empire. But I apprehend, that a material change will take place in the nature of civil government at the Millennium; that it shall be animated by the spirit of Christianity, so that the support afforded by it shall be more effectual for the welfare and prosperity of the church, than it had been at any former period. In all ages and nations, (except among the Jews during the time they were governed by a theocracy) the civil government has been animated by a spirit different from the spirit of the church. The spirit of civil government is submission to the civil ruler. The spirit of the church is submission to God in Christ. The end of the former is, to make men good members of society in the present life; that of the latter is, to qualify men for being inhabitants of the city of God in a future life. By the former, theft, robbery, disobedience to government, are severely punished, while atheism, infidelity and blasphemy

blasphemy are overlooked. It is obvious, that in those times, when civil government was most friendly to the church, as in the age of Constantine and at the Reformation, still it was animated by a different spirit. But at the Millennium, civil government shall be animated by the same spirit with the church of Christ, and shall hold the same ends in view, the glory of God, the honor of the Redeemer, and the eternal interests of mankind, maintaining peace and good order in society, as means subservient to these ends. The language of civil government to the church, when most friendly, has been hitherto no more than this: “Form laws against what-“ever is inimical to the eternal interests of the“subject, enforce those laws, if it is necessary,“I will support you.” But the language of civil government at the Millennium will be: “I“am the ordinance of God, and the minister of“God, for good, I will form laws against what-“ever is inimical to the eternal interests of the“subject, I will enforce those laws¹, serve God“in your deportment, preach the word, dispense“the ordinances.” But how does it appear, that civil

(1) The blasphemer, (Lev. xxiv. 11.) and the Sabbath breaker, (Numb. xv. 33.) were both brought before Moses, as the civil Magistrate. Their sentence was pronounced by him, and their punishment executed by his orders.

civil government will undergo such a change at the Millennium? It appears from Daniel, chap. ii. 35. The great image seen by Nebuchadnezzar in his dream, is the symbol of the four universal monarchies, or, in other words, of civil government, as a power distinct from, but coexistent with the church, at length the “stone cut out without hands,” which represents the church, smote the image on the toes; “then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, the gold broken to pieces together, and “became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors and the wind carried them away, “and no place was found for them.” We are not to suppose with levellers, and some Millenarians, that civil government shall then cease to exist, it is the ordinance of God, and necessary for maintaining order in the world; nor are we to imagine that it shall be swallowed up by the ecclesiastical government: That was the attempt of Antichrist; but it is expressly said, “no place was found for it;” meaning, (I apprehend) that it ceases to exist, as a power distinct from the church, being now animated by the spirit of the church, and holding the same ends in view, the glory of God, the honour of the Redeemer, and the eternal interests of mankind.

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This sentiment is confirmed by Daniel, chap. vii. 27. “And the kingdom and dominion, “ and the greatness of the kingdom under the “ whole heaven, shall be given to the people of “ the saints of the most High.” If the saints shall govern the world, they must, as a body politic, be animated by the spirit of Christ, of which they individually partake. The saint discovers the spirit by which he is animated, in the government of his family; so God says of Abraham: “I know that he will teach his house-“ hold my statutes.” By parity of reason, when the saints become a body-politic, they will transfer the spirit by which they are animated to the civil government.

We may infer this change likewise from Rev. xi. 15. “And the seventh angel sounded; and “ there were great voices in heaven, saying, “ The kingdoms of this world are become the “ kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and “ he shall reign for ever and ever.” If at the period specified, Christ shall reign over the kingdoms of the world in a manner different from his mode of governing them at any former period, so as to claim a special interest in them, Is it not reasonable to suppose, that he thus reigns, by infusing his Spirit, which all along animated his church, (properly termed his kingdom),

dom), into the civil government, in the various kingdoms of the world?

This change in the civil government is fully established by Rev. xx. 4. "I saw thrones, and "they sat upon them, and judgment was given "unto them: and I saw the souls of them that "were beheaded for the witness of Jesus;— "and they lived and reigned with Christ a thou- "sand years." Thrones of judgment in scripture-language signify the civil government, so it is said of Jerusalem, "Here are set thrones of "judgment, the thrones of the house of David," Psal. cxxii. 5. meaning the supreme council of the nation fixed at Jerusalem by Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron xix. 8. Martyrs are represented sitting on these thrones of judgment, to intimate, that the civil governors of the period pointed out in the prophecy shall be animated by the spirit of the martyrs of Jesus, not only as individuals, but as governors, that is, in their legislative and judicative capacities.

IV. A fourth character of the Millennium is, that all who profess Christianity, or the far greater part of them¹, shall experience its vital power.

(1) That some persons during the Millennium shall not experience the efficacy of divine grace, I gather from Ezek. xlvii. 11. The waters issuing from the sanctuary,

power. In every former period, multitudes reconciled a profession of Christianity to the gratification of their own lusts and passions; nay, upon it has been grafted a system of tyranny, idolatry and wickedness, the most odious the world ever beheld. But at the Millennium, the divine beauty and power of this religion shall be conspicuously displayed in the conduct of those who embrace it.

The influences of the Spirit shall be extensively and abundantly bestowed, the ordinances of religion shall be diligently and faithfully dispensed, and in consequence multitudes shall be actually converted; for all this is represented to the prophet Ezekiel in a vision, by the emblem of a “ river issuing from the sanctuary and entering into the sea, which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. “ And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the “ rivers

ver. 1. certainly signify the extensive and copious diffusion of divine grace in the ordinances of religion, during the Millennium; but still the “ miry places thereof, and “ the marshes thereof, shall not be healed, they shall be “ given to salt.” Meaning, either that certain corners of the earth shall not receive the Christian religion, or that some individuals shall not experience its vital power; and from Isa. lxv. 20. “ The sinner being an hundred “ years old shall be accursed.”

“ rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither; for they shall be healed, and every thing shall live whither the river cometh. And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it, from En-gedi, even unto En-eglaim: they shall be a place to spread forth nets, their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many,” Ezekiel xlvi. 8, 9, 10¹.

The degree of knowledge bestowed on the church shall be superior to that she enjoyed at any former period; “ for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea,” Isa. xi. 9. Hab. ii. 14. It shall not only be extensive, but profound. “ Moreover, the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be seven-fold, as the light of seven days,” Isa. xxx. 26. Christianity shall then have due influence on the hearts and lives of men, producing its genuine fruits, righteousness and true holiness. “ Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.—Righteousness shall go before him, and shall set us in the way of his steps,” Psal. lxxxv.

II.

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(1) See the same emblem used, Joel iii. 18. Zech. xiv. 8. Rev. xxii. 1, 2.

11. 13. “The parched ground shall become
“a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water.
“—And an high-way shall be there, and a way,
“and it shall be called, The way of holiness;
“the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall
“be for those: the way-faring men, though
“fools shall not err therein,” Isa. xxxv. 7, 8.
This is the period of which it is said, “All thy
“children shall be taught of the Lord,” Isa. liv.

13. “Thy people also shall be all righteous,”
Isa. lx. 21. “I will put my law in their in-
“ward parts and write it in their hearts.—And
“they shall teach no more every man his neigh-
“bour, and every man his brother, saying,
“Know the Lord: for they shall all know me
“from the least of them unto the greatest of
“them, saith the Lord,” Jer. xxxi. 33, 34.

The holiness of that period shall correct lux-
ury and excess; persons of superior rank and
riches shall not abuse their dress and equipage,
to gratify pride and vanity, nor the abundance
of their tables, to promote gluttony, drunken-
ness and lust. Such is the sentiment conveyed
by the prophet Zechariah, chap. xiv. 20, 21.
“In that day shall there be upon the bells of
“the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and
“the pots in the Lord’s house shall be like the
“bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Je-
“rusalem and in Judah shall be Holiness unto
“the

“ the Lord of hosts ; and all they that sacrifice,
“ shall come and take of them, and seeth there-
“ in : and in that day there shall be no more
“ the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of
“ hosts ;” that is, the equipage allowable to
distinguish persons of superior rank shall be con-
secrated to God, as much as the mitre of the
high priest ¹. The meat and drink of their
tables shall be as sacred to God’s glory, as the
meat and drink offering presented in bowls
before the altar. All ranks shall eat and
drink to the glory of God ² ; and the cere-
monial holiness, consisting in the distinction of
meats, shall be done away. At that time no
hypocrite or profane person ³ shall be a member
of the church of God.

V. A universal peace established throughout the world, is another character of the Millen- nium

(1) On the high priest’s mitre was a plate of gold, on
which the words, “ Holiness to the Lord,” were engr-
aved, Exod. xxvi. ii. 36.

(2) The precept is already given to Christians, 1 Cor.,
x. 31. then it shall be obeyed universally.

(3) Canaanite signifies Merchant, and so represents
hypocrites, who make a traffic of religion. It is likewise
the proper name of the uncircumcised, expelled before the
Israelites, and so may signify persons openly profane. I
have included both meanings in the paraphrase.

nium, which distinguishes it from every former period. "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth ; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in funder, he burneth the chariot in the fire," Psal. xlvi. 9. "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people ; and they shall beat their swords into plow shares, and their spears into pruning hooks : nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more," Isa. ii. 4. Micah iv. 3, 4. "I will break the bow, and the sword, and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely," Hosea ii. 18.

This peace is the consequence of his government, who teaches universal rectitude, by which the privileges of each individual are secured, without encroachment on those of one another. "In his days shall the righteous flourish ; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth," Psal. lxxii. 7. It is the native fruit of that religion which corrects the fierce passions of men, by inculcating universal love. "From whence come wars and fightings among you ? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members ?" These fierce passions transform men into wild beasts, that delight in tearing one another's bowels. But at the Millennium, the disposition of these wild

wild beasts shall be changed. “ The wolf also
“ shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall
“ lie down with the kid : and the calf, and the
“ young lion, and the fatling together, and a
“ little child shall lead them. And the cow
“ and the bear shall feed ; their young ones
“ shall lie down together : and the lion shall
“ eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child
“ shall play on the hold of the asp, and the
“ weaned child shall put his hand on the cock-
“ atrice den. They shall not hurt nor destroy
“ in all my holy mountain : for the earth shall
“ be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the
“ waters cover the sea,” Isa. xi. 6.—9.

VI. Another ingredient in the happiness of the Millennial church is, great abundance of temporal mercies. This is repeatedly predicted. “ Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that “ thou shalt sow the ground withal, and bread “ of the increase of the earth, and it. shall be “ fat and plenteous : in that day shall thy cattle “ feed in large pastures. The oxen likewise, “ and the young asses that ear the ground, shall “ eat clean provender, which hath been win- “ nowed with the shovel and with the fan,” Isa. xxx. 23, 24. “ Therefore they shall come “ and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow “ together to the goodness of the Lord, for
“ wheat,

“ wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the
“ young of the flock, and of the herd: and
“ their soul shall be as a watered garden, and
“ they shall not sorrow any more at all,” Jer.
xxxii. 12. “ And I will make them, and the
“ places round about my hill, a blessing; and I
“ will cause the shower to come down in his
“ season; there shall be showers of blessing.
“ And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit,
“ and the earth shall yield her increase,” Ezek.
xxxiv. 26. 27. “ Behold, the days come, saith
“ the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake
“ the reaper, and the treader of grapes him
“ that soweth seed, and the mountains shall
“ drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt,”
Amos ix. 13. “ The seed shall be prosperous,
“ the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground
“ shall give her increase, and the heavens shall
“ give their dew, and I will cause the rem-
“ nant of this people to possess all these things,”
Zech. viii. 12.

It must be allowed these prophecies are applicable chiefly to the Jews, but they all refer to that period in which the Jews make a part of the Millennial church. We may therefore infer, that they represent the condition of all who partake of the same spiritual blessings with them. This is certainly implied in the expressions of the prophet Ezekiel just quoted, “ I will make
“ them,

“ them, (the Jews), and the places round about
“ my hill, (the whole Gentile church), a bles-
“ sing.”

We need not have recourse to that miraculous fruitfulness of the earth which Papia feigned, in order to fulfil this prophecy. Plenty is the natural consequence of the moral change which takes place in the world at the Millennium. The universal righteousness of that happy period will prevent despotism in government, anarchy in the people, as well as the devastations of war, by which the earth is left uncultivated, or its produce is destroyed. The religion of that period will civilize savages, and destroy among civilized nations the numerous occupations that minister solely to the lawless passions of men, thus directing a great multitude of the human race to the useful arts of agriculture, who had been formerly idle, and a burden upon the labour of others. The love universally felt and practised in that period, will lead those who have abundance, to distribute cheerfully and freely to the necessities of those who may be in need.

Even inclement seasons, which have so frequently occasioned scarcity and famine, can have no place at the Millennium; for these are punishments inflicted by the moral Governor of the world, for the violation of his laws; but in that

that happy period, when men are made subject to the laws of God, in heart and life, there will be no occasion for such punishments. On the contrary, tokens of his good will, in sending favourable seasons, and in blessing the produce of the earth, are expressly promised. Now, by withholding his blessing, "He turneth a "fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein." Whereas by bestowing it, "He turneth the wilderness "into a standing water, and dry ground into "water-springs: And there he maketh the "hungry to dwell: that they may prepare a "city for habitation. And sow the fields, and "plant vineyards: which may yield fruits of "increase. He blesseth them also, so that they "are multiplied greatly: and suffereth not their "cattle to decrease," Psal. cvii. 34.—38.

VII. The last character of the Millennium I shall mention is, that the Jewish church shall then make the most conspicuous figure in the Christian world. This character is clearly deducible from the circumstances already mentioned. It is the natural consequence of their extraordinary conversion, their being trained by God in the wilderness, their being employed as his instruments to punish the enemies of religion, and as his missionaries to convert the nations.

But

But what puts it beyond a doubt is, that the new Jerusalem so gloriously described, that many have supposed it to be the church triumphant, is, in reality, the national polity of the Jews during the Millennium. It is expressly called “the bride, the Lamb’s wife,” Rev. xxi. 9. and so must be the same with the Lamb’s wife mentioned chap xix. 7. which I have already proved to be the Jewish nation converted. It only makes a part of the “new earth,” chap. xxi. 1. that is, of the whole Christian church spread throughout the world. It is called “the beloved city,” and expressly distinguished from “the camp of the saints,” chap. xx. 9. so it must signify the Jewish church, distinct from the Gentile churches in communion with her. It is said to “come down from God out of heaven,” chap. xxi. 2.—10. because their polity is not contrived by human wisdom, but received immediately from God; every part of it is according to the rule and measure delivered by him. It is said to be built of precious stones, and gold, chap. xxi. 18.—21. to intimate, that it shall excel the contrivances of human wisdom, on the subject of government, as far as a city built of gold and precious stones is superior to the most finished specimens of human architecture. Similar metaphors have been used by the Old Testament prophets, to describe the fu-

ture glory of the Jewish church. “ I will lay
“ thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foun-
“ dations with sapphires. And I will make thy
“ windows of agates, and thy gates of carbun-
“ cles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones,”
Isa. liv. 11, 12¹.

The minutiae of their polity, I pretend not to explain; however, it is clearly asserted, that their worship shall be spiritual; the material temple, the great glory of their ancient polity, shall not exist, nor shall the service then practised be used. Such is the meaning of these expressions: “ I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it, Rev. xxi. 22. And this representation is perfectly conformable to that of the ancient prophets; for God intimates by the prophet Isaiah, chap. lxvi 1, 2, 3. a renunciation of the material temple, with the sacrifices offered on it, for the spiritual temple of the heart. “ Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, “ and the earth is my footstool: where is the “ house that ye build unto me? and where is “ the place of my rest? For all those things hath “ mine hands made, and all those things have “ been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I “ look, even to him that is poor, and of a con- “ trite spirit, and trembleth at my word. He
that

(1) See also Jer. xxx. 16.—22. Chap. xxxiii. 17.—26,

“ that killeth an ox, as if he slew a man ; he
“ that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog’s
“ neck ; he that offereth an oblation, as if he
“ offered swine’s blood ; he that burneth in-
“ cense, as if he blessed an idol.” True it is,
that he intimates that the Jews would adhere to
the temple-service after God had abolished it,
and that for this reason, he would give them
over to delusion, and the punishments they feared.
“ Yea, they have chosen their own ways,
“ and their soul delighteth in their abominati-
“ ons. I will also choose their delusions, and
“ will bring their fears upon them,” ver. 3, 4.
But when they shall be restored from their dis-
persions in the latter days, the Jews shall acqui-
esce in the renunciation of the temple-service.
“ It shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied
“ and increased in the land ; in those days, saith
“ the Lord, they shall say no more, The ark of
“ the covenant of the Lord ; neither shall it
“ come to mind, neither shall they remember it,
“ neither shall they visit it, neither shall that
“ be done any more,” Jer. iii. 16.

But instead of the ceremonial law, God shall
make with them a new and more spiritual co-
venant. “ Behold, the days come, saith the
“ Lord, that I will make a new covenant with
“ the house of Israel and with the house of
“ Judah ; not according to the covenant that

“ I made with their fathers in the day that I
“ took them by the hand, to bring them out
“ of the land of Egypt ; (which my covenant
“ they brake, although I was an husband unto
“ them, saith the Lord;) but this shall be the
“ covenant that I will make with the house of
“ Israel, After those days, saith the Lord, I will
“ put my law in their inward parts, and write
“ it in their hearts ; and will be their God, and
“ they shall be my people,” Jer. xxxi. 31.—33.

Their national church shall be remarkable
for righteousness and holiness ; into the new
Jerusalem “ shall in no wise enter any thing
“ that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh a-
“ bomination, or maketh a lie ; but they which
“ are written in the Lamb’s book of life,”
Rev. xxi. 27. So the prophets assert, “ Open
“ ye the gates, that the righteous nation which
“ keepeth the truth may enter in,” Isa. xxvi. 2.
“ Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of
“ Israel, As yet they shall use this speech in the
“ land of Judah, and in the cities thereof,
“ when I shall bring again their captivity, The
“ Lord bless thee, O habitation of justice,
“ and mountain of holiness,” Jer. xxxi. 23.
“ Then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall
“ no strangers pass through her any more,”
Joel iii. 17. “ The remnant of Israel shall not
“ do iniquity, nor speak lies ; neither shall a
“ deceitful

“deceitful tongue be found in their mouth,” Zeph. iii. 13. “Thus saith the Lord, I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem shall be called, A city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts, the holy mountain,” Zech. viii. 3. “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them,” Ezek. xxxvi. 25.—27. “And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them,” Ezek. xxxvii. 24.

The presence of God which shall be given to the whole Christian Church throughout the world, during the Millennium, shall be more eminently bestowed on the Jewish church. When the Apostle saw the New Jerusalem “coming down from God, out of heaven,” he “heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will

“ will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God,” Rev. xxi. 3. “ The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it ; for the glory of God did light-en it, and the Lamb is the light thereof,” verse 23. This likewise has been foretold by the prophets, “ They shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt.—Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them.—And will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them ; yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people,” Ezek. xxxvii. 25, 26, 27. “ The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee, but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself ;—for the days of thy mourning shall be ended,” Isaiah ix. 19, 20. “ Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God,” Isa. lxii. 3. “ They shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land,” Zech. ix. 16. These two last passages have the same meaning. They intimate that the Jewish church, upon their conversion

version and restoration, shall be as conspicuous among the Gentile churches, as a crown is in the dress of a king, or as the precious stones which adorn the crown, and make the most brilliant figure in it.

The Gentile churches shall acknowledge the superiority of the Jewish church, by receiving the ordinances of religion from her, and submitting to her decisions. “ And the nations of them which are saved, shall walk in the light of it : And the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day ; for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it,” Rev. xxi. 24, 25, 26. “ And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations,” Rev. xxii. 2. This coincides exactly with the representation of the Old Testament prophets. “ Therefore thy gates shall be open continually, they shall not be shut day nor night, that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and the kingdom that will not serve thee, shall perish : yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.—The sons also of them that afflicted thee, shall come bending unto thee : and all they that despised thee, shall bow

“ bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet ;
“ and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord,
“ the Zion of the holy One of Israel,” Isa. ix.
“ 11, 12. 14. “ Their seed shall be known a-
“ mong the Gentiles, and their offspring among
“ the people : all that see them shall acknow-
“ ledge them, that they are the seed which the
“ Lord hath blessed,” Isa. lxi. 9. “ And thou,
“ O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the
“ daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, e-
“ ven the first dominion ; the kingdom shall
“ come to the daughter of Jerusalem,” Micah
iv. 8. During the Millennium, “ the saints
“ shall take the kingdom,” *i. e.* the church uni-
versally shall rule over the world ; but in that
kingdom, the first dominion shall belong to
the Jewish church. “ Thus saith the Lord of
“ hosts, In those days it shall come to pass, that
“ ten men shall take hold out of all languages
“ of the nations, even shall take hold of the
“ skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will
“ go with you ; for we have heard that God is
“ with you,” Zech. viii. 23. Here the nature of
the dominion exercised by the Jewish church is
illustrated. It is not that of conquerors over re-
luctant subjects, but that of pastors over a wil-
ling people, who submit themselves to their go-
vernment, from a conviction that God is emi-
nently

nently present with their nation'. When the account given of the Millennial church is viewed

(1) When the conduct of Divine Providence to the Jewish nation in past ages, is viewed in conjunction with the promised superiority of their church in future times, some may be led to charge the Deity with partiality. In order to remove that prejudice, observe, that the Jews were originally separated from the other nations of the world, as being the progenitors of the Saviour of mankind, and the trustees of the oracles of God, containing the knowledge of that Saviour. Their separation until the appearance of Christ, was absolutely necessary, to afford rational and convincing evidence to the other nations of the world, as to the person of the Saviour, and the truths they ought to believe concerning him. It was therefore no less beneficial to us, than to them. The conduct of Divine Providence to their nation, during the period that elapses betwixt the appearance of Christ and their future restoration, does by no means favour of partial kindness. They are expelled from their land, dispersed among the nations, persecuted and despised every where, retaining their infidelity, yet preserved a separate people. But all this is intended as much for the benefit of the other nations, as for their own instruction. Their calamities, their preservation, and their obstinate infidelity, are all foretold in the prophecies; their state being according to the representation given, affords a direct demonstration of the truth of God's word! and this demonstration ascertains to the rational mind the reality of those things revealed in the same word, which are beyond the reach of our bodily senses. Their infidelity, in a particular manner, gives force to our application of the

ed in the scriptural light, it furnishes no pretext for the dangerous errors which enthusiasts

prophecies concerning the Messiah. Had the Jews, as a nation, believed on Christ, when he first appeared, infidels would have cried out, Collusion; and asserted, that the prophecies were penned after the event: But in regard they then were, and still are his bitterest enemies, and at the same time were the trustees of the oracles concerning him, we may be assured they would permit nothing to be asserted favourable to his cause. These oracles, therefore, have to us all the force of the evidence given by an enemy, in favour of the cause he opposes.

Their future conversion and restoration is calculated as much for the benefit of the other nations of the world, as for their own advantage. These events, when accomplished, shall not only give additional force to the evidence arising from prophecy, but shall likewise animate their love more abundantly, and raise their zeal to a pitch beyond other nations, while the design of this is to qualify them for propagating the gospel throughout the world. They are now in the furnace of affliction; hereafter they shall enjoy a far greater prosperity than their fathers, and dwell together in the love of God. These changes are intended to temper them, as instruments for the work to which God has appointed them; and in these changes, therefore, God discovers as great a regard for the work, as for the instrument, for the other nations of the world, as for them. When we view the matter thus, instead of suspecting partiality, we have reason to admire the evidences of infinite wisdom and paternal love, which God manifests to us, in his dealings with them. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom. xi. 33.

afsts have grafted upon it ; nor does it contain any thing contrary to the analogy of faith, but rather affords a solid ground of consolation, for those who are interested in the success and prosperity of the church of Christ. For the present, as in times past, men of wit may employ their talents to ridicule,—men of power, their influence to oppose,—corrupt churchmen may pervert,—and profligate Christians disgrace the religion of Jesus Christ. But the time is fast approaching, when God himself shall set all to rights. Religion shall be had in honour. Truth and righteousness shall prevail, in defiance of the opposition of earth and hell. Such as are faithful witnesses to the truth, however unsuccessful in their day and generation, have the consolation to think, that when they shall be reaping the reward of their fidelity, in the higher House, the doctrines they taught, and the prayers they offered, shall have their full effect on generations yet unborn.

As this view of the Millennium, unfolds the several representations of scripture concerning it ; so there is nothing in it improbable, or beyond what we may reasonably expect from the demonstrations of divine power, already manifested in the dispensations of grace, and the conduct of providence. If we consider the powerful effect produced by means seemingly inadequate

quate, in the first ages of Christianity; if we reflect that a few illiterate fishermen, teaching naked truths, without eloquence to persuade, or power to oblige men to receive them, triumphed over the prejudices of the Jews, and the enmity of the Gentiles; broke down the bulwarks of superstition and priestcraft; resisted the utmost force of a warlike empire exerted to suppress them, and induced multitudes to receive the truth in the remotest corners of the earth; it cannot appear improbable, that by a greater exertion of the same divine power, at the period which God hath appointed, the truth shall spread more extensively, and operate more effectually on those who receive it. Again, if we reflect, that the greatest empires have had their fall; particularly, that the last and most powerful, which fondly vaunted itself to be eternal, has been dissolved by his command, “ who hisseth “ from afar, and the nations of the earth obey “ him.” Is there any thing unreasonable in saying, that the mightiest empires now on earth, whether Pagan, Mahometan, or Popish, are feeble barriers against the power of that stone cut out without hands, which shall reduce them to dust, and become a mountain to fill the whole earth.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the Events which shall take place, from the close of the Millennium, to the great Day of Judgment.

SECTION I.

The Invasion of the Church by Gog.

THE happiness of the church, after the union of Jews and Gentiles into one body, continues a thousand years uninterrupted. There is notwithstanding reason to suppose, that certain countries, or at any rate, individuals remain all along strangers, to the vital influence of the truth. These are, “the miry places not healed by the “river that issued from the sanctuary,” Ezek. lxvii. 11. It may happen too, that the long continued prosperity of that period, shall, towards the close, multiply worldly minded persons, within the pale of the church; for it is certain, that of such the army of Gog consists, as we shall presently see: “and when the thousand years “are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his “prison, and shall go out to deceive the na-“tions which are in the four quarters of the “earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them toge-“ther to battle; the number of whom is as the “sand

“ sand of the sea. And they went up on the
“ breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp
“ of the saints about, and the beloved city: and
“ fire came down from God out of heaven, and
“ devoured them,” Rev. xx. 7.—9. This ac-
count is short, because the same enemy of the
church, had been already largely described by
the Old-Testament prophets. This serves chiefly
to note the time of his appearance in the world.

The prophet Ezekiel gives a minute account
of the enemy by the same name, chap. xxxviii.
and xxxix. throughout. No doubt some of the
most eminent commentators on the Apocaylypse,
as Mede and Newton, apply the description of
the prophet to a different period, and to quite
another person than this mentioned by the A-
postle: However, a minute examination and
comparifon of both passages, must convince the
unprejudiced that they refer to the same person:

1. The prophet repeatedly enforces on Judea,
that a long period of time should intervene be-
twixt the prediction and the accomplishment of
it. “ After many days thou shalt be visited: in
“ the latter years thou shalt come into the land,”
(Ezek. xxxviii. 8.) “ It shall be in the latter
“ days,” ver. 16. “ Art thou he of whom I have
“ spoken in old time by my servants,—which
“ prophesied in those days many years, that I
“ would bring thee against them?” ver. 17. Gog
and his army are “ to come up against the peo-
“ ple

“ ple of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land” of Judea, ver. 16. And this circumstance not only refutes the application of the prophecy to times and events already past, but likewise directs our attention to the last event predicted, that which immediately precedes the general resurrection, and last judgment, with which the apostle has explicitly connected it.

2. The prophet carefully notes another circumstance relative to the time of Gog’s appearance, that the Jews should then be in possession of their own land, after a long dispersion. “Thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations,” Ezek. xxxviii. 8. “to turn thine hand upon the defoliate places that are now *inhabited*, and upon the people that are *gathered out* of the nations,” ver. 12. This circumstance, in conjunction with that mentioned in the preceding paragraph, clearly demonstrates, that the prophet has an eye to the re-settlement of the Jews in their own land, after their present dispersion. Now, from the time the Jews go up to take possession of their native land, until the day of judgment, the Apocalypse shews, that no memorable battle is fought betwixt the members of the church and her enemies, excepting two, the battle

tle of Armageddon immediately before the Millennium, and the battle of Gog and Magog immediately after it ; therefore, the Gog and Magog of Ezekiel, must refer to one or other of these. But there are other circumstances in the relation, which effectually prevent the application of it to the battle of Armageddon ; and therefore the Gog and Magog of Ezekiel, and of St. John, must be the same.

First, The prophet represents the Jews in possession of their land previous to the invasion of Gog ; but they only take possession by the battle of Armageddon, and were not in possession before it was fought.

Secondly, He represents them as dwelling at ease, not dreading an enemy, nor prepared for an attack ; “ And thou shalt say, I will go up “ to the land of unwalled villages ; I will go to “ them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of “ them dwelling without walls, and having nei- ther bars nor gates,” Ezek. xxxviii. 11. This can by no means apply to Armageddon, for at that time they are represented as being aware of the preparation of their enemies ; yea, as being trained up and employed as the instruments in God’s hand, to subdue them.

Thirdly, He represents them as wealthy, pos- sessed of cattle and goods in abundance. “ To “ turn their hand upon the people which have “ gotten

“ gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the
“ midst of the land, hast thou gathered thy com-
“ pany to take a prey? to carry away silver and
“ gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take
“ a great spoil, Ezek. xxxviii. 12, 13. All this
supposes them to have been long in possession of
their own land. Both the sacred and the pro-
phane historians shew, that wealth is not the at-
tainment of an infant state; it is a blessing ac-
quired by a course of years. This representa-
tion, therefore, cannot apply to the battle of
Armageddon.

Fourthly, The prophet represents the Jews on the defence in the invasion of Gog, and their enemies on the offensive. This is obvious from the whole strain of the narrative; but in the battle of Armageddon, the enemies of the church are on the defence, (see vial 6.) and the Jews on the offensive, (see Rev. xix. 11.); therefore, the Gog of Ezekiel, and the battle of Armageddon cannot relate to the same event.

But all these circumstances fitly apply to the Gog and Magog of St. John. The time of their invasion is at the end of the Millennium, when the Jews have been a thousand years in possession of their native land. During all that period, universal peace prevails, and therefore they dread no enemy;—outward prosperity abounds, and therefore they have cattle and goods; love and communion subsist betwixt them and the

Gentile church, and therefore they are not disposed to make any hostile attack.

Bishop Newton allows, that the prophecy of Ezekiel and this of St. John, remain yet to be accomplished, and cannot be absolutely certain, that they may not both relate to the same event, but thinks it more probable that they relate to different events¹. I shall just glance at his reasons, “ The one is expected to take effect before, but the other will not take effect till after the Millennium.” To this a sufficient answer has been given in the observations already made, on the time of Gog’s appearance. “ Gog and Magog are said expressly to come from the north quarters and the north parts ; but in St. John, they come from the four quarters, or corners of the earth. Gog and Magog, in Ezekiel, bend their forces against the Jews resettled in their native land ; but in St. John, they march up against the saints, and church of God in general.”

These circumstances do not contradict but illustrate each other. Some of those which the Prophet had omitted, the Apostle mentions ; and others which the Prophet had mentioned, the Apostle omits. May we not suppose, that the leader of this vast army comes from the north quarters, and yet that multitudes of a similar spirit

(1) Newton’s Diff. on Prophecies.

rit join his standard from the four corners of the earth? In fact, the countries from which his followers come, according to the Prophet, are situate with respect to Judea to the four quarters of the earth. Is it not reasonable to expect, that so immense an army shall lay waste an extensive territory, and of course harrafs the church in many places, and yet their chief design may be against, and their final overthrow may take place in the land of Judea? So far is the Apostle from contradicting the relation of the Prophet in this respect, that he expressly mentions their compassing about the beloved city, that is, the Jewish church. The learned prelate proceeds: "Gog and Magog, in Ezekiel, are with very good reason supposed to be the Turks, but the Turks are the authors of the second woe, and the second woe is passed before the third woe, and the third woe long precedes the time here treated of." This argument is certainly conclusive against the existence of the Ottoman empire, at the period in which St. John represents Gog and Magog compassing about the beloved city. But the very good reasons which induce him to suppose Gog and Magog in Ezekiel, to represent the Turks, I see not.

The thirty-third chapter of Isaiah throughout, refers to this invasion of Gog. My reasons for this opinion are the following, of which the reader

reader may judge : 1. It cannot apply to Sennacherib's invasion in a strict and literal sense ; because, veres 5, 6. contain expressions too lofty to suit Hezekiah's government, but they are strictly true of Christ's. Again, in veres 21, 22, 23, 24. we have the language in which the Prophets uniformly describe the happiness of the latter times ; but what connection can be traced betwixt the destruction of Sennacherib's army, and the glory of the Millennium ? Whereas the destruction of Gog's army and the Millennium, are closely connected.—2. The connection of this with the preceding chapter, lead me to apply it to Gog. The former chapter concluded with an account of the Millennium ; this describes an invasion of Judea posterior to it, precisely agreeing to the account in the Apocaylypse, that when the thousand years are expired, Gog leads his army against the beloved city.—3. All the circumstances agree to Gog's invasion. This is a sudden attack with the sword, veres 1. and 8. compared with Ezek. xxxviii. 9. 15, 16. and Rev. xx. 8. The invasion is undertaken to gather spoil from the peaceable habitations of the church. Compare ver. 1. with Ezek. xxxviii. 11, 12. Yet the attempt shall end in making the invaders a spoil to the people of God, ver. 1. 4. with Ezek. xxxix. 10. God's hand is visible in their destruction, and their punishment is partly by fire, ver. 3. 10, 11, 12. Ezek. xxxviii. 22. and Rev. xx. 9.

After

After the destruction of Gog, the church, at least that of the Jews, enjoys an uninterrupted calm, till the day of judgment! Compare ver. 10. with Ezek. xxxix. 22.

Another passage which appears to me to refer to the invasion of Gog is, Zech. xiv. 1, 2, 3. The Prophet having mentioned an attack upon Jerusalem, and the consequences, promises that God shall interpose for the deliverance of his people, in the same manner that he interposed on a former occasion. “ As when he fought in “ the day of battle ;” the former battle to which the reference is made being likewise future, the Prophet begins to describe it, as well as what precedes and follows after it, from verse 4. to the close. The circumstances mentioned clearly shew, that the battle to which he alludes, is that of Armageddon : Now the only battle posterior to Armageddon, is that of Gog and Magog : therefore the battle first mentioned ; and referring to Armageddon as a prior event, must be that of Gog and Magog.

When we compare these passages, and receive their united light, we have as distinct a view of this last persecution as we could reasonably expect or desire, of an event not accomplished.

The agents in this persecution are distinctly noted. The great invisible adversary is the first mover of this, as of every former persecution, while the Sovereign Ruler sees meet to permit

permit this last effort of the enemy, by taking off the restraint under which he was laid for a season, (Rev. xx. 7.) not only to try the faith and patience of his people, but likewise to separate the chaff from the wheat. It appears clearly, that the church had much declined by long continued prosperity, and harboured multitudes of hypocritical professors in her bosom, for these lay hold of the first opportunity that offers, to throw off the mask, and join the standard of an enemy against her.

As to the visible agents, the leader of the army in this expedition is described by the country in which he resides, and his occupation: "Gog, in the land of Magog, the chief "prince of Meshech and Tubal," Ezek. xxxviii. 2. The inspired writers commonly denominate nations by the names of their progenitors, and countries by the names given them on the first partition of the earth betwixt the sons of Noah. Now, it appears from Genes. chap. x. 2. that Magog, as well as Meshech and Tubal, were sons of Japheth, and all the learned agree, that they originally settled in the neighbourhood of each other, to the east and north-east of the Euxine Sea, and that Magog is the father of the Scythians and Tartars. It appears to me, that the intention of the prophecy is to show, that some adventurous Tartar prince residing near the Euxine Sea, and reigning over

the

the neighbouring countries, shall at the end of the Millennium, set up the standard of rebellion against the church. But we are carefully to observe, that besides his natural subjects, he is joined by malcontents, from all the corners of the earth. So the Apostle says expressly, (Rev. xx. 8.) and the prophet Ezekiel says as much by implication; for he enumerates, not only “Gomer and his bands, Togarmah and his bands, out of the north quarters;” but he likewise mentions Persia, Ethiopia, and Lybia, countries widely distant from each other, and from the land of Magog, and with respect to Judea, situated at the four quarters of the earth.

The motives which animate these enemies of the church are various. The grand adversary, under the influence of the old enmity, endeavours, in this last effort to suppress religion by open violence, not to undermine it as formerly, by the beast and false prophet¹.

The

(1) The latest Popish writers on the subject of Anti-christ, apply the prophecy concerning Gog in Ezekiel to Antichrist, and triumph in it, as containing an ample vindication of the Papacy; for Gog appears to be an individual, not a succession of individuals; an Asiatic, not an European prince; an open, not a secret enemy of religion. But the answer is easy; Antichrist and Gog, though both enemies to religion, are very different powers, rising in very different ages of the world, the appearance of the last distant from the final fall of the first 1000 years.

The leader of this expedition appears to be chiefly under the influence of covetousness. “Thou shalt say, I will go to them that are at rest,—to take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the people,—which have gotten cattle and goods.—The merchants of Tarshish shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil,” Ezek. xxxviii. 11, 12, 13. The multitudes who join his standard from all corners, besides the expectation of booty, seem to be actuated by resentment against the discipline of the church. It would appear, they consider themselves oppressed by the restraints of religion, and have recourse to him for protection. This is implied in the Prophet’s ironical address to the leader, “Be thou a guard unto them,” ver. 7. The holiness and happiness of the Millennial state, cannot permit any species of oppression; if therefore the followers of Gog claim his protection to deliver them from the dominion of the church, it must be a desire to be set free from the restraints of religion. No oppression is so grievous to an unsanctified heart, as that which arises from the purity of Christianity. A desire to shake off this yoke, is the true cause of that opposition

position Christianity has met with from the world in every period, and will, it is most likely, be the chief motive to influence the followers of Gog in his time. It would appear, that all parties joining in this expedition are encouraged, by the hope of obtaining an easy conquest; a sentiment they would readily adopt from the state of the church a thousand years before: “Swords were beaten to plowshares, and spears to pruning hooks, nation did not lift up sword against nation, neither did they learn war.” As they felt no injury, and feared no danger, they were ignorant of the art of war, and negligent of those means of defence, which the jealousy and fear of mankind provided in more perilous times.

The Prophet introduces Gog meditating on this circumstance in his own mind, and then communicating it to his followers, “At the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought. And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages, I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates,” Ezek. xxxviii. 10, 11.

The terror and dismay occasioned by Gog and his formidable army in Judea, is described by the prophet Isaiah: “Behold, their valiant

“ ones shall cry without ; the ambassadors of
“ peace shall weep bitterly. The highways lie
“ waste, the way-faring man ceaseth: He hath
“ broken the covenant, he hath despised the
“ cities, he regardeth no man. The earth (land)
“ mourneth and languisheth ; Lebanon is a-
“ shamed and hewn down ; Sharon is like a
“ wilderness ; and Bashan and Carmel shake off
“ their fruits.” chap. xxxiii. 7, 8, 9. At length
he and his army are represented as arriving at
Jerusalem ; “ and the city shall be taken, and
“ the houses rifled, and the women ravished ;
“ and half of the city shall go forth into cap-
“ tivity, and the residue of the people shall not
“ be cut off from the city,” Zech. xiv. 2. For
“ in this alarming situation the church is de-
scribed as having recourse to the protection
of the Deity. “ O Lord, be gracious unto us ;
“ we have waited for thee : Be thou their arm
“ every morning, our salvation also in the time
“ of trouble,” Isa. xxxiii. 2. While they are
engaged in prayer, a conviction of God’s inter-
position in the destruction of their enemies, is
impressed on their heart ; so that their suppli-
cation is changed to thanksgiving. “ At the
“ noise of the tumult the people fled ; at the
“ lifting up of thyself the nations were scattered.
“ And your spoil shall be gathered like the ga-
“ thering of the caterpillar : As the running to
“ and fro of locusts, shall he run upon them.

“ The

“ The Lord is exalted ; for he dwelleth on high :
“ He hath filled Zion with judgment and righ-
“ teousness,” Isa. xxxiii. 3, 4, 5. As a farther
answer to their prayers, the Deity is introduced
addressing Gog and his army, in solemn threaten-
ings. “ Now will I rise, saith the Lord :
“ now will I be exalted, now will I lift up
“ myself. Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall
“ bring forth stubble : your breath as fire shall
devour you. And the people shall be as the
“ burnings of lime : as thorns cut up, shall they
“ be burned in the fire,” Isa. xxxiii. 10, 11, 12.

These threatenings are instantly executed. The multitudes that compose the vast army of Gog are destroyed, partly by the swords of each other, partly by the fire of the elements, as God formerly destroyed his enemies of Armageddon. “ And it shall come to pass at the same time, “ when Gog shall come against the land of Is-
“ rael, saith the Lord God, that my fury shall
“ come up in my face. For in my jealousy, and
“ in the fire of my wrath, have I spoken, Surely
“ in that day there shall be great shaking in
“ the land of Israel.—And I will call for a sword
“ against him throughout all my mountains,
“ saith the Lord God : Every man’s sword shall
“ be against his brother. And I will plead a-
“ gainst him with pestilence, and with blood ;
“ and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands,
“ and

“ and upon the many people that are with him,
“ and overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire
“ and brimstone,” Ezek. xxxviii. 18, 19. 21, 22.
“ And fire came down from God out of heaven,
“ and devoured them,” Rev. xx. 9.

SECTION II.

A Decline of the Gentile Churches.

No remarkable event occurs during the period that elapses betwixt the destruction of Gog and the last day ; only it would appear, from various passages already quoted, that the Jewish church continues faithful until Christ’s appearance. It is particularly asserted after the destruction of Gog, Isa. xxxiii. 20. “ Thine eye shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down, not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.”—“ So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God, from that day and forward,” Ezek. xxxix. 22. Their endeavours to maintain purity and fidelity, are increased in consequence of Gog’s invasion. Being fully sensible of the great evils arising from a spirit of opposition to the discipline of the church, which animated

mated Gog and his followers, they endeavour to discover and suppress the first movements of it. So I understand these expressions : “ And they “ shall sever out men of continual employment, “ passing through the land, to bury with the “ passengers those that remain upon the face of “ the earth, to cleanse it.—And the passengers “ that pass through the land, when any feeth a “ man’s bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, “ till the buriers have buried it in the valley of “ Hamon-gog,” *Ezek. xxxix. 14, 15.* These expressions cannot be taken in a literal sense; because the army of Gog, if it were allowed to remain unburied for seven months, would occasion pestilential disorders: Again, if you suppose the bones mentioned, to be a few scattered over the mountains, which had escaped the notice of those who buried the main body at the end of seven months, the danger arising from them would be over; and the burial of them does not appear of so great importance, as to require that men should be appointed for that employment; nor could it be said that the burying of these bones, *cleansed* the land. The expressions are certainly figurative, as the Jews unconverted are compared to dead and dry bones, *Ezek. xxxvii.* So the bones of Gog’s army here, signify persons unconverted, who resist the authority of the church, and hate the restraints of religion.

That

That men answered to the continual employment of discovering these bones, implies, that the church appoints officers for the purpose of searching into the first movements of the spirit mentioned. When the spirit is discovered, the officers employed make it publicly known to the ordinary civil magistrates, who, by every legal method, suppress it. The proper employment of the civil magistrate is, to suppress all vice, immorality, and irreligion, as a brier covers out of sight a nauseous carcase. By the lawful diligent exercise of discipline, the land is cleansed, the Jewish church is kept pure.

However, it would appear that the Gentile churches are represented as declining from the purity of the Millennial state, and that the same spirit of opposition to the truth, which animated Gog and his followers, shall continue to prevail and to spread till the last day.

This is implied in the representations given of the state of the world immediately before the last trumpet sounds. "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage until the day that Noe entered into the ark: and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold,

“ fold, they planted they builded. But the
“ same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rain-
“ ed fire and brimstone from heaven, and de-
“ stroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in
“ the day when the Son of man is revealed,”
Luke xvii. 26.—30. “ Yourselves know per-
“ fectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh as
“ a thief in the night. For when they shall
“ say, Peace and safety: then sudden destruc-
“ tion cometh upon them; as travail upon a
“ woman with child; and they shall not es-
“ cape,” 1 Theff. v. 2, 3. “ There shall come
“ in the last days scoffers, walking after their
“ own lusts, and saying, where is the promise
“ of his coming?” 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4.

From these passages, it appears, that the day of judgment comes upon the world unexpectedly, as a thief in the night, consequently the greater number of that generation are not real Christians; for of these the Apostle says, “ But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief,” 1. Theff. v. 4. Again, the men of that generation are compared to those of very corrupt times. In the days of Noah, “ all flesh had corrupted their way.” In the days of Lot, the inhabitants of the plain were monstrously wicked, “ the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah was great, and their sin was very grievous.” Further, it is expressly

expressly said, that they promise themselves “ peace and safety :” that is, in defiance of the remonstrances and threatenings of God’s word. They indulge their lawless passions, and ridicule the notion of a future judgment. In a word, what the deluge was to the old world, and the sulphureous shower to the inhabitants of the plain, the coming of the Son of man shall be to the great body of the men of that generation, the signal of their destruction. All these circumstances evince a general corruption of manners, and consequently a great deviation from the purity of the Millennial state.

Corruption following after the purity and happiness of the Millennium, serves to prove fully what had been shewn partly before, that unsanctified human nature cannot bear prosperity, because it leads men to resist God’s authority, to gratify their own lusts, at the expence of violating his laws, and defacing the beauty and order of his creation ; that all the ordinary means of grace, that all the common and extraordinary dispensations of divine Providence which the wisdom of God devised, and his long suffering patience exercised for the reformation of the human race, are ineffectual to reform the whole, and that the malignant distemper of sin requires a more violent remedy. Accordingly, the world now ripe for destruction, and the church

church for eternal salvation, God sets his throne for the last judgment.

S E C T I O N III.

The Great Day of Judgment.

The scripture account of that solemn and awful event follows.

While wicked men are eagerly intent on their worldly schemes, and the gratification of their lawless passions, scoffing at the notion of ever being called to account for their conduct; while Christ's faithful followers then on earth, are ready to faint, their faith being almost staggered by the delay of the judgment, and the progress of increasing wickedness in the world: In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the Judge appears, "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God," 1 Thess. iv. 16. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire," 2 Thess. i. 7, 8. He sets his throne in the air, (within the region of the clouds, 1 Thess, iv. 17. In that situation, it is visible of course to the upper hemisphere, and most likely, by some medium refracting

fracting the light, it shall be visible to the lower hemisphere also'.

The appearance of the Judge, his throne and attendants shall be glorious beyond conception ; " The Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, and shall sit upon the throne of his glory," Matth. xxv.

31. Even on the mount of transfiguration, where Christ shewed a faint gleam of his heavenly glory, " his face shined as the sun, and his raiment white as the light," Matth. xvii. 2. How transcendently bright must his appearance be, when he shines in all his glory ! The throne must be splendid, suitable to the dignity

(1) Water refracts the rays of light, so that when the ocean is the horizon, the body of the sun is visible, after it is beneath the level of the horizon. When " the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day," Joshua x. 13. we are not to suppose the diurnal motion of the earth was stopped, but most probably some medium, created by the Almighty, refracted the light so powerfully, that the body of the sun was visible, when in the opposite meridian, and the refracting power proportioned to the distance of the sun from the meridian of the place, would make the sun appear to stand still. By whatever means the sun was made visible and stationary, after it was actually set, we may reasonably expect that the same divine power, on so solemn an occasion as the last judgment, will make the Judge, his throne, and attendants visible to the whole earth.

ty of the person who sits on it. A faint representation of such a throne was seen by Moses, Aaron, and the elders of Israel. "They saw "the God of Israel; and there was under his "feet, as it were a paved work of sapphires- "stone, and as it were the body of heaven in "his clearness," Exod. xxiv. 10. The attendants of the throne are "all the angels," an innumerable host, "the chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels," Psal. lxviii. 17.; and of various ranks, "thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers." We may conceive this innumerable and glorious host, ranged according to their ranks, on each side of the throne, in the form of a crescent. Most probably in a similar form behind the throne, and the host of angels, is arranged that "flaming fire," 2 Thess. i. 7. designed as the instrument of punishing the wicked. Close by the throne stands "the archangel, bearing the "trump of God."

The Judge being set, and his attendants arranged, he issues his mandate to the archangel, who sounds the trumpet. In an instant, "the dead in Christ," from righteous Abel, to the last of those who expired on the earth, shall rise from their graves; "the dead in Christ shall rise first," 1 Thess. iv. 16. and receive spiritual and incorruptible bodies. "It is

“ is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body,” 1 Cor. xv. 42, 43, 44. The Judge again issues his command, and the archangel sounds a second time¹. In the twinkling of an eye, the faithful followers of Christ then on earth shall be stripped of their corruptible bodies, and receive the same spiritual incorruptible bodies with which their brethren arose from the dead. “ Behold, I shew you a mystery, We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; (for the trumpet shall sound); and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed,” 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. The whole church of Christ thus united into one body, are conveyed by the attendant angels to the throne. “ Then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air,” 1 Theff. iv. 17. The Judge upon their arrival pronounces that gracious

(1) The Scriptures clearly mark the several steps of the Judgment. And considering the solemnity of the occasion, I reckon it probable, (but do not assert it dogmatically), that each step shall begin with a distinct sound of the trumpet.

rious sentence, “ Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundations of the world.” The sentence implies, that their sole claim to glory is God’s free love, who designed and prepared a state of eternal happiness for them, before the foundations of the world, when they neither did good or evil ; and that the distinguishing character of those for whom glory is prepared, is, Love to Christ the Mediator, whom they received by faith, and entertained with love in their hearts, while he was despised and rejected by the world.

“ For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat : “ I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink : I was a “ stranger, and ye took me in : naked, and ye “ clothed me : I was sick, and ye visited me : I “ was in prison, and ye came unto me.” A humble sense of unworthiness, which convinces the righteous at all times, that “ their goodness “ extendeth not to God ;” a coldness of heart to their greatest and best Benefactor, which they often felt and complained of on earth, induce them now to disclaim the approbation given, as being unworthy of it. Then shall the “ righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw “ we thee an hungered and fed thee ? or thirsty, “ and gave thee drink ? When saw we thee a “ stranger, and took thee in ? or naked, and “ clothed thee ? Or when saw we thee sick, or “ in

“ in prison, and came unto thee ?” To which the Judge answers, that he accepts of their love and friendship to one another for his sake, as the best evidence of their sincere love to himself. “ The King shall answer, and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me,” Matth. xxv. 40. Instantly a place is provided for them, next the throne, nearer than the attendant angels, for they are set down as assessors with Christ, in judging wicked men and devils. “ Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world ?—Know ye not that we shall judge angels ?” 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3.

By the command of the Judge, the archangel sounds a third time, and all the wicked who had died from the beginning of the world, arise from the dead ; they, together with the wicked men then alive on the earth, are collected into one place, by the angels who attend the throne, (Matth. xiii. 39.—41.) One charge is laid against all, a defect of love to Christ the Mediator. “ I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat,” Matth. xxv. 42. Various were the ways in which the wicked shewed this defect of love. Some crucified, some blasphemed him, some rejected his offers of grace, some persecuted his followers, some despised his ordinances, some

some loved the world, and some their lusts, in preference to him. It were endless to enter into a minute investigation of all these crimes that prove their defect of love ; and yet it would appear, that the wicked who proudly justify their conduct on earth, will attempt at first to justify their conduct before the throne of judgment ; for “ they shall answer him, saying, Lord, when “ saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stran- “ ger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did “ not minister unto thee ? ” ver. 44. However, he advances one proof equally applicable to all, that they shewed no love to his followers for his sake : “ Then shall he answer them, saying, “ Verily I say unto you, In as much as ye did it “ not to one of the least of these, ye did it not “ to me,” ver. 45. He charges them not so much with doing evil, as with the neglect of doing good, nor so much with a defect of charitable actions, as a defect of principle ; and that they were not charitable to his followers for his sake. Eternal happiness is a free gift : none of the human race may claim it by birthright, or by merit ; (Rom. vi. 23.) though free to those who receive it, it is purchased at a costly rate, by the death and sufferings of Christ the mediator : a defect of love, therefore, to him, the purchaser and donor, is a sufficient reason to exclude from the gift. Hear ye self-righteous Pharisees and tremble.

It is not necessary to call witnesses, in order to substantiate the charge. To the Judge it is evident by his own omniscience, to the surrounding host of saints and angels, he will make it evident, by commanding the light to shine into the conscience; so that in an instant, each individual pleads guilty, and the whole multitude of wicked men, fall prostrate on their knees, confess their desert, and utter lamentable wailings. "It is written, as I live, saith the "Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every "tongue shall confess to God," Rom. xiv. 11. "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every "eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail "because of him," Rev. i. 7.

The wicked spirits, who went always about resisting the will of God, and tempting mankind to the commission of sin, shall be summoned: "For the angels which kept not their first "estate, but left their own habitation, he hath "reserved in (for) everlasting chains, under "darkness, unto the judgment of the great "day," Jude, ver. 6.

The Judge now pronounces that solemn and awful sentence on wicked men and devils, "De- "part from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, "prepared for the devil and his angels." Matth. xxv. 41. The instant the sentence is pronoun- ced,

ced, it is executed ; the host of surrounding angels hurl the fire that descended from heaven against the visible heavens of the earth ; the natural fire of the elements rushes out at once, to meet the celestial fire, a tremendous noise is the consequence¹ : this is followed by a universal conflagration, fierce, as fanned by the breath of the Almighty. “ The day of the Lord will “ come as a thief in the night, in the which the “ heavens shall pass away with a great noise, “ and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, “ the earth also, and the works that are therein “ shall be burnt up.” 2 Pet. iii. 10.

After the destruction of the visible heavens and earth, wicked men and wicked spirits are consigned to a place of eternal torment. It is called a lake burning with fire and brimstone ; whether it is so really, or figuratively, I pretend not to determine.

It is said of the beast and false prophet, “ These both were cast alive into a lake of fire “ burning with brimstone,” Rev. xix. 20. “ and the devil that deceived them, was cast “ into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the

(1) The loudest thunder is occasioned by the fire contained in a few acres of cloud, rushing into another cloud, or into the earth. How inconceivable is the noise that shall be occasioned by discharging at once the fire diffused through all the air, earth, and water.

“ beast and the false prophet are, and shall be
“ tormented day and night for ever and ever,”
Rev. xx. 10. “ And whosoever was not found
“ written in the book of life was cast into the
“ lake of fire,” ver. 15.¹

Immediately

(1) Some who pretend to revere the authority of Scripture, have denied the eternity of hell torments; and others have asserted, that wicked men shall be consumed and annihilated by the conflagration of the latter day. But waving the argument taken from the epithets, Eternal and Everlasting, so frequently given to the punishment inflicted on the wicked after the General Judgment, (Dan. xii. 2. Matt. xxv. 46. 2 Theff. i. 9.) the error of both these opinions is evident, 1. From the expressions of our Lord, Mark ix. 44.—46.—48. where he says expressly, That hell fire “ shall never be quenched. “ Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” A relaxation of the pains of hell can only arise from one of two causes; either from the weakness of the subject of punishment, being unable to sustain an eternal pain, or from the mercy of the Judge, removing the punishment. But the expressions of our Lord guard against both these suppositions. Against the first, when he says, “ their worm dieth not.” Against the second, when he says, “ the fire is not quenched.” 2. The punishment of wicked men is the same inflicted on malignant spirits, “ Fire prepared for the devil and his angels.” But the devil and his angels are immaterial beings, consequently they are naturally immortal. Therefore, any punishment inflicted on them, must be eternal: so also must the punishment

Immediately as the sentence is executed, the Lord Jesus Christ sets out with the glorified saints, accompanied by the angels, to present them before the throne of his Father. Wide open fly the portals of eternal day ;—they are admitted ;—the Son now addresses the Father, “Behold me and the children whom thou hast given me; thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word,” John xvii. 6. “Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the scriptures might be fulfilled,” ver. 12. “And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou

ishment of wicked men be. 3. Annihilation is not a sufficient fence to the divine law. Temporal death is the annihilation of men’s existence here; but in the certain prospect of death, wicked men violate human laws with deliberate resolution; by parity of reason, they will violate the divine laws deliberately, and with little remorse, if annihilation is the utmost punishment dreaded for such violation; but an eternity of misery, when believed, flops short the career of the most daring sinner. 4. In annihilation there are no degrees, if the last punishment; therefore it follows, that all are punished equally. Now, as it were a gross defect of justice in human government, to punish all crimes equally, is it reasonable to charge this defect upon the divine government? Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

“ thou in me, that they may be made perfect
“ in one, that the world may know that thou
“ hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou
“ hast loved me. Father, I will that they also
“ whom thou hast given me be with me where
“ I am; that they may behold my glory, which
“ thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me be-
“ fore the foundation of the world,” ver. 22,
23, 24. “ And so shall we be for ever with the
“ Lord,” 1 Thess. iv.

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